# Body Language:
# The Limits of Communication between Mortals and Immortals in the *Homeric Hymns*.

Dissertation

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Abstract

This project explores issues of communication as represented in the *Homeric Hymns*. Drawing on a cognitive model, which provides certain parameters and expectations for the representations of the gods, in particular, for the physical representations their bodies, I examine the anthropomorphic representation of the gods. I show how the narratives of the *Homeric Hymns* represent communication as based upon false assumptions between the mortals and immortals about the body. I argue that two methods are used to create and maintain the commonality between mortal bodies and immortal bodies; the allocation of skills among many gods and the transference of displays of power to tools used by the gods. However, despite these techniques, the texts represent communication based upon assumptions about the body as unsuccessful. Next, I analyze the instances in which the assumed body of the god is recognized by mortals, within a narrative. This recognition is *not* based upon physical attributes, but upon the spoken self identification by the god. Finally, I demonstrate how successful communication occurs, within the text, after the god has been recognized. Successful communication is represented as occurring in the presence of ritual references. That is, when the text contains elements that refer to ritual, whether or not these elements can be linked to any "real" ritual outside the text, communication between mortals and immortals is represented as being successful. It is successful in that it leads to the completion of an action to the satisifaction of both sides.

I conclude that the *Homeric Hymns* offer as a message to their audience (both the mortal and immortal audience) a lesson about proper communication between gods and humans.

Dedication

Dedicated to William and Pamela Buchholz
Thanks Mom and Dad

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# CHAPTER 1

## BREAKING THE TEMPLATE: A NEW APPROACH TO AN OLD PROBLEM.

This work began, as many do, with the question of why. Why do the gods of Greek myth have such difficulties in communicating successfully with their human counterparts? The Greek gods are portrayed anthropomorphically, with only limited differences from the portrayals of humans. They each think, play, plan, get jealous, feel anger, and experience pleasure. Why then do these two beings, so alike in their descriptions in mythic narratives, have such difficulties understanding the others' most basic wants and needs in these same narratives? Why does myth portray gods and mortals as not communicating successfully with one another? And what answers or solutions does myth offer for the difficulties created by this lack of successful communication?

By examining the interplay of myth and ritual in the *Homeric Hymns*, I explore and offer answers to these questions. First, I will draw on a cognitive model to describe the anthropomorphic representation of the gods. This model will provide certain parameters and expectations for the representations of the gods, in particular, for the

physical representations of their bodies. Next, I will show how the narratives of the *Homeric Hymns* represent communication based upon assumptions between the mortals and immortals about the commonality of the body (which is, in fact, in no way common to both). I argue that two techniques are used to create and maintain the similarity between mortal bodies and immortal bodies, the allocation of skills among many gods and the use of tools by the gods to account for certain displays of power. However, despite these techniques, the texts represent communication based upon assumptions about the body as unsuccessful. Next, I analyze the instances in which the assumed body of the god is recognized by mortals, within a narrative. This recognition is *not* based upon physical attributes, but upon the spoken self identification by the god. Finally, I demonstrate how successful communication occurs, within the text, after the god has been recognized. Successful communication is represented as occurring in the presence of ritual references. That is when the text contains elements that reference ritual, whether or not these elements can be linked to any "real" ritual outside the text, communication between mortals and immortals is represented as being successful. I conclude that the *Homeric Hymns* offer a lesson to their audience (both the mortal and immortal audience) about proper communication between gods and humans.

Before beginning to analyze the *Hymns* themselves some background is needed. First, I will examine the history of scholarship on the relationship between myths and rituals, which from now on I will refer to as the myth/ritual problem, and the effect that this body of scholarship has had on the way that we approach myths. Next, I will explore the performative context of the *Hymns*, with the specific intention of demonstrating that

they addressed a dual audience, both gods and humans. Finally, I will set forth the cognitive model which I will use when discussing the anthropomorphism of the Greek gods.

## I. Myth and Ritual

The relationship between myth and ritual is an often debated topic in classical scholarship. Although I do not embrace a specific approach or offer a specific answer about the relationship between the two, my thesis assumes a level of interaction between myths, as narrated in the *Homeric Hymns*, and the ritual elements referenced by them. As such, it is necessary to give a brief history of the myth/ritual debate.

Jan Bremmer, in a recent survey of the history of the myth/ritual debate, after giving a separate history of scholarship for both myth and ritual says, "The rise of interest in myth and ritual in the second half of the nineteenth century naturally also posed the question of their relationship."[1] While the concurrent interest in both myth and ritual lead to the rise in scholarship about the relationship between the two, Sarah Iles Johnston, offers another compelling reason why classical scholars have latched onto the relationship between myth and ritual. That is, scholars link myth to ritual because the ancient sources themselves make this link.[2] I will first discuss the ancient sources' use of myth and ritual and how they connected the two. Then I will give a brief outline of modern scholarship.

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[1] Bremmer (2005) p. 32.

[2] Johnston (forthcoming) "Revisiting Myth and Ritual" delivered on October 26, 2008.

A. Ancient Sources

Pausanias is a good example to illustrate how ancient sources would link myths and rituals in an aitiological manner. I include here, in my discussion of ritual, the cult sites which Pausanias describes. Pausanias, in his description of Greece, frequently relates a myth when describing a cult site. These myths provide background information about the site, and this information would presumably be known to a worshipper and would be, to a greater or lesser extent, part of their beliefs.[3] The following passage from the Attic portion of Pausanias' description of Greece illustrates this well. Pausanias had been describing the Areopagus and then in connection with it mentions both the sanctuary of the *Semnai* and the monument to Oedipus, which are located nearby. Each of these cult sites have, in Pausanias, mythic information attached to it.

> Near by is a sanctuary of the goddesses which the Athenians call the *Semnai*, but which Hesiod in the *Theogony* calls Erinyes. It was Aeschylus who first represented them with snakes in their hair. But neither on their images nor on any of the under-world deities that are there is there anything terrible. There are images of Pluto, Hermes, and Earth, at which they who have been acquitted on the Areopagus sacrifice; sacrifices are also offered on other occasions by both citizens and aliens. There is inside the peribolos a monument to Oedipus, whose bones, after diligent inquiry, I found, were brought from Thebes. I don't trust the account of Oedipus' death in Sophocles because of Homer, who says that after the death of Oedipus, Mecisteus came to Thebes and took part in the funeral games.
>
> πλησίον δὲ ἱερὸν θεῶν ἐστιν ἃς καλοῦσιν Ἀθηναῖοι Σεμνάς, Ἡσίοδος δὲ Ἐρινῦς ἐν Θεογονίᾳ. πρῶτος δέ σφισιν Αἰσχύλος δράκοντας ἐποίησεν ὁμοῦ ταῖς ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ θριξὶν εἶναι·τοῖς δὲ ἀγάλμασιν οὔτε τούτοις ἔπεστιν οὐδὲν φοβερὸν οὔτε ὅσα ἄλλα κεῖται θεῶν τῶν

[3] For Pausanias, the myth or mythic reference is prior to the site and the reason for its establishment, as in the case of Oedipus, whose life clearly preceded the shrine housing his bones. Harrison (1890) and scholars following her would invert this to say that the myth comes from the ritual misunderstood.

ὑπογαίων. κεῖται δὲ καὶ Πλούτων καὶ Ἑρμῆς καὶ Γῆς ἄγαλμα·ἐνταῦθα θύουσι μὲν ὅσοις ἐν Ἀρείῳ πάγῳ τὴν αἰτίαν ἐξεγένετο ἀπολύσασθαι, θύουσι δὲ καὶ ἄλλως ξένοι τε ὁμοίως καὶ ἀστοί. ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἐντὸς τοῦ περιβόλου μνῆμα Οἰδίποδος, πολυπραγμονῶν δὲ εὕρισκον τὰ ὀστᾶ ἐκ Θηβῶν κομισθέντα· τὰ γὰρ ἐς τὸν θάνατον Σοφοκλεῖ πεποιημένα τὸν Οἰδίποδος Ὅμηρος οὐκ εἴα μοι δόξαι πιστά, ὃς ἔφη Μηκιστέα τελευτήσαντος Οἰδίποδος ἐπιτάφιον ἐλθόντα ἐς Θήβας ἀγωνίσασθαι.
(Pausanias 1.28.6-7)

Pausanias uses mythic references to give background to these cultic locations (the sanctuary of the *Semnai* and Oedipus' tomb). Regarding the monument to Oedipus, Pausanias tells us that Oedipus' tomb containing his bones, brought from his mythic homeland of Thebes, is located here. He then goes on to evaluate the two versions of Oedipus' death known to him from literature. He tells the reader that he prefers Homer's version to that of Sophocles, presumably because it is the earlier and therefore more authoritative version. Pausanias' audience would be familiar with Homer, Sophocles, and presumably other versions of the myth of Oedipus. What is interesting here is not only that the myth of Oedipus is invoked in relation to his worship at the cult site, but that specific "textualized" versions of the myth are mentioned, evaluated, and judged. There was no one single authoritative unchangeable myth, but different versions of it, selected and altered by different authors, could all be considered applicable if not equally valid in their relation to the cult. Thus the *Homeric Hymns*, upon which most of the conclusions contained here are based, are both one of many versions of each myth and at the same time a legitimate version, which can be believed, in whole or in part, or contradicted.

Pausanias also links myth and ritual in his account of the shrine to the *Semnai*. He tells us that the Athenians call the goddesses of the Areopagus *Semnai* and then

provided the additional information that Hesiod calls them *Erinyes* in the *Theogony*. By equating the two here, and mentioning Hesiod's account, Pausanias has linked the *Semnai Theai*, the cultic goddesses, to the more literary and mythic *Erinyes*.[4] Putting aside the complex relationship between the Erinyes and the *Semnai Theai*, which is not the issue here, Pausanias has again used a narrative reference, in this case to Hesiod, to further explain the cultic site. Presumably by glossing the *Semnai* as "whom Hesiod in the *Theogony* calls Erinyes" Pausanias intends to make clear to his audience just which goddesses the shrine honors. Thus, for Pausanias, narratives of myth are a source to help explain and expand upon ritual or ritual sites.

B. Modern Scholarship

Modern scholarship can be organized around three different scenarios for the relationship between myth and ritual. The three particular categories, as phrased here, are from Jane Harrison, although they have been expanded upon and redefined by more recent scholars: one, myth comes from ritual, two, myth is the scenario of a dramatic ritual, and, three, myth and ritual arise *pari passu*.[5]

[4] The relationship between the *Semnai Theai*, the *Erinyes* and the *Eumenides* is complex. For a discussion and more bibliography see Johnston (1999) Ch. 7.

[5] Bremmer (2005) p. 32. For a survey of the myth/ritual debate, see Bremmer (2005), Burkert (2002), and Versnel (1989) and (1993, p. 15-88).

The first was developed by James Frazer and his Cambridge colleagues and followers.[6] In this approach, myth arose to explain ritual, particularly rituals that are no longer understood. Jane Harrison offered the idea that "ritual practice misunderstood [by practitioners] explains the elaboration of myth."[7] Thus, myths, which come down to us embedded in literature, are used, in turn, as sources of information about what happened during a specific ritual or at a specific cult site. For example the *Hymn to Demeter* is often used to shed light on the Eleusinian Mysteries.[8] While there are obvious links between some myths and ritual, such as the kykeon drunk by Demeter in the *Hymn to Demeter* and by initiates in the Eleusinian Mysteries, there are few myths that reflect ritual at this level.

The second approach, in which myth is scenario of a dramatic ritual, was prominent in the so called *Myth and Ritual School*.[9] The idea is that myth comes from and out of ritual. This view is directly opposite to the views of the ancient sources, such as Pausanias, as discussed above, who understood myth to narrate (or even establish) the reasons for ritual and to legitimize cultic locations. Harrison's 1912 book *Themis* went further to suggest that myth is the plot of the *drōmenon* (the thing acted out or ritual).[10]

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[6] For the Cambridge ritualists, see Calder (1991) and Ackerman (1991).

[7] Harrison and Verrall (1890) p. iii.

[8] See Richardson (1974) pp. 12-30, West (2003) pp. 7-9, and Foley (1993) pp. 84-97.

[9] The main proponents of this were the so called *English-Scandinavian Myth and Ritual School* (Samuel Henry Hook, Edwin Oliver James, Ivan Engnell, and Geo Widengren). They concentrated mainly on the Old Testament and the ancient Near East.

[10] Harrison (1912) p. 331.

This idea was taken up and used to reconstruct rituals from myths, even unattested rituals.[11]

This move to reconstruct one from the other is not entirely arbitrary. Myths often contain a narrative structure which is comparable to the ritual structure. This is most obvious in initiation scenarios.[12] For example, the Quest Pattern,[13] wherein a young man leaves home, defeats a monster, deflowers a virgin and returns triumphant, along with other experiences, is one such narrative structure linked to boys' initiation rituals. This correlation seems to suggest a genetic relationship between the myths which narrate them and the initiation rituals which enact them. This leads to the third approach listed above, that myth and ritual arise *pari passu*.

Walter Burkert offered an attractive explanation for this link. Burkert claimed that initiation rituals are "demonstrative accentuations of biologically programmed crises, menstruation, defloration, pregnancy, and birth…The roots of the tales go back to verbalized action, whether ritualized or not."[14] As both myth and ritual go back to

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[11] For example, see Widengren (1969. pp. 150-157).

[12] The term initiation and the scholarship surrounding it has its own history, as complex as the history of the Myth and Ritual debate. The term has two applications within scholarship which must be differentiated. First, it can be applied to ancient mystery cults. The Latin "initio" to which the English can be traced was a translation of Greek term *musteria*. Second, the term initiation can be applied generally to rites of puberty and, as an extension of this, to transitional rites in general. See Graf (2003) for a history of scholarship and discussion of the term.

[13] Propp (1928).

[14] Burkert (1979) p. 57.

"action programs," they cannot be reduced to one another but originate equally, *pari passu*.[15] Hendrik S.Versnel took up Burkert's "action programs" and applied it to seasonal festivals. From an analysis of the Kronia he inferred not only an equal and codependent (*pari passu*) origin but also a correspondence in structure and atmosphere for myth and ritual.[16] Versnel's analysis of the Kronia is strongly critiqued by Bremmer.

> During the Greek Kronia festival, slaves and masters feasted on equal footing, and masters sometimes even served their slaves. Versnel has argued that the myth and ritual in this complex, in which he finds a combination of positive (extreme relaxation, abundance, etc.) and negative elements (homicide, human sacrifice, etc.), correspond in 'structure and atmosphere' in such a manner that 'both "symbolic processes deal with the same type of experience in the same affective mode", and this "pari passu".'[17] Yet it is not a new insight that myth and ritual correspond in the same affective mode.[18]

Bremmer also points out Versnel's lack of temporal differentiation in his sources, for both myth and ritual, in his analysis.[19] Versnel fails ultimately in proving a *pari passu* origin for the myth and ritual of the Kronia. However, Burkert's "action programs" and the idea of a *pari passu* origin (as opposed to myth originating from ritual or ritual originating from myth), allow for myth and ritual to be linked without being, necessarily, dependent upon one another. The two can exist together but also independently. Every part of a myth need not be contained in its ritual re-telling nor does every part of a myth

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[15] The term '*pari passu'* (at an equal pace) was taken up from Harrison by the English-Scandinavian Myth and Ritual School, Burkert, Versnel and others.

[16] Versnel (1993) p. 135. For a critique of Versnel's analysis of the Kronia see Bremmer (2005, p. 39-43).

[17] Versnel (1993) p. 147.

[18] Bremmer (2005) pp. 40-41. See Graf's discussion of "Ausnahmeritual" and "Ausnahmefest" ("rites of reversal") (1985, p. 5).

[19] Bremmer (2005) pp. 41-43.

need to correspond to some enacted portion of ritual. Because of this independence, when myth and ritual are brought together, they complement each other, saying more than either could independently.

In summary and to over simplify, antiquity would claim myth as prior or superior to ritual; scholars such as Harrison argued for the supremacy of ritual over myth; and, finally, Burkert claims an equal and dependant relationship.

A. Myth > Ritual (Antiquity)
B. Ritual > Myth (Harrison et. al.)
C. Ritual ~ Myth (Burkert)

The separation of myth (the narrative) and ritual (the performed act) is itself an arbitrary one. As Jan Bremmer has pointed out, "During most of the 19th century, ritual signified a text, a scenario, or even a liturgy. As such, it was regularly used in connection with the books of the Vedas or the *Rituale Romanum*, the standard manual for the Roman Catholic mass. It was only toward the end of that century, around 1890, that the term started to be used in its modern meaning of repetitive, symbolic behavior."[20] The term ritual used to be applied to texts, and narratives about how to perform rituals. There is an overlap here with Harrison's *drōmenon,* the part of the myth she identified as being "acted out" during ritual.

This overlap, between the "repetitive, symbolic behavior" that makes up ritual and the part of the myth which is "acted out" during ritual, is only more pronounced when the context of a given literary version of a myth is considered. Ancient society was overwhelmingly oral. Much of the literature which we receive in the form of texts was

[20] Bremmer (2004) p. 32.

originally composed and performed orally. This is significant for any study of these texts, but especially for a study of the elements of myths that are believed to have been recited or performed, orally, in a ritual context, such as the *Homeric Hymns*.

Thus, my project explores not how a certain myth and ritual might have arisen *pari passu*, but how a myth contained in a ritual object/performance (the *Hymns*) uses ritual references to advance its message, which I identify as the problems in communication between gods and humans.

## II. *Homeric Hymns*

This study focuses on the *Homeric Hymns*. The dating of the *Hymns* is problematic. They are some of our oldest Greek texts, along with Homer and Hesiod. Richard Janko's 1982 book, *Homer, Hesiod and the Hymns,* gives a full discussion on dating for each of the major *Hymns*.[21] We can only date the longer *Hymns* with any confidence. Janko gives the following dates for each of the major *Hymns*: Apollo, second decade of the sixth century, c. 585 B.C.E.; Demeter later half of the 7th century or early 6th century; Aphrodite, before the middle of the 7th century; Hermes, later 6th century; Dionysus, 7th century. The *Hymns* vary in length from as short as 3 to 4 lines to over 500.

The longer poems are the second through the sixth traditionally. The *Hymn to Demeter* which comes second in West's text was discovered in a later manuscript. These five contain extended narratives, i.e. myths about the god or gods invoked in the poem.

[21] Janko (1982) and (1981).

These five are the *Hymns to Dionysus, Demeter, Apollo, Hermes,* and *Aphrodite*. *Hymn* one (Dionysus) is fragmentary. There are also three *Hymns* of medium length, *Hymn* 6 to Aphrodite, *Hymn* 7 to Dionysus and *Hymn* 19 to Pan. Both the *Hymn to Dionysus* (7) and the *Hymn to Pan* (19) display the characteristics of the longer H*ymns,* notably a narrative describing the birth or attainment of status of the god. I will examine only the five longer *Hymns* in the following chapters.

The poems were *prooimia,* preludes to longer recitation of epic poetry by *rhapsodes*.[22] Of the shorter poems, nine "begin from the god", that is, they open with a salute to the deity (2, 11, 13, 16, 22, 25, 26, 28, 31). Most of them conclude by saying that the singer will now pass onto another song. *Hymns* 31 and 32 explicitly state that the transition will be to a narrative about the deeds of heroes. These shorter *Hymns* may be excerpts that have omitted the narrative central section (which the longer poems retain), preserving only the useful invocation and introduction, which a *rhapsode* could employ in the manner of a prelude. For instance, *Hymn* 18 preserves a version of the beginning and end of the *Hymn to Hermes,* as noted by Robert Parker.[23]

Thus, there is a reference to the practice of *rhapsodes* introducing recitations of epic in this manner in the *Odyssey* (8.499). Demodocus, in answering Odysseus's request for the story of the wooden horse, "began from the god." When Thucydides quotes from the *Hymn to Apollo* (3.104.4) he calls it a *prooimion.*

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[22] See the general introduction in Càssola (1975, xii-xxi) for a discussion of the debate over the terms *hymnos* and *prooima*.

[23] Parker (1991) p. 1. For more on the structure of the *Hymns* see Janko (1981).

Thucydides, when quoting the *Hymn to Apollo*, attributes the work to Homer (3.104). The *Hymns* remain anonymous and are never attributed to any author but Homer in ancient times, although eventually it is understood that it is a collection by various authors. The third *Anonymous Life of Homer* preserves the ancient scholarly opinion that the only genuine works of Homer were the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and that "the *Hymns* and the rest of the poems attributed to him are to be reckoned alien."[24] The "Lives of Homer" are most likely derived from the *Homeridai*, a guild devoted to reciting Homer's poetry. It is said that they were originally Homer's descendents and hailed from Chios. The *Homeridai* believed themselves to be the inheritors of the Homeric tradition. They were looked up to by ordinary *rhapsodes* and it was due in a large part to their influence that the proper pronunciation of Homeric poetry was maintained into Alexandrian times.[25] It is also due to this influence that the *Hymns* continued to be attributed to Homer, whatever their real origins may have been known to be. Martin L. West summarizes the authorship and attribution issue in the introduction to this 2003 Loeb edition of the *Hymns* thus: "To the modern critic it is clear from differences of language, political reference, and geographical outlook that the *Hymns* were composed by various authors in various places…Their authors' names were not recorded because rhapsodes did not claim individual credit for what they added to the inherited stock of hexameter poetry."[26]

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[24] West (2003) p. 5. See also West (1999), for a discussion on the *Homeridai*.

[25] Wackernagel (1956) 1094.

[26] West (2003) p. 5. See also Calame (1995) and Race (1992).

That the composers of the individual *Hymns* did not claim credit for their work, but instead attributed it to the figure of Homer has to do not only with tradition, as discussed above, but also with the performative context of the *Hymns*. West, in his Loeb introduction, describes the context of the *Hymns'* composition and performance as particular, local, and religious. "Most of them, we may suppose, were originally composed for recitation in a particular setting, at some particular festival or gathering. Sometimes a specific local reference is apparent from the poem itself. Of the long *Hymns*, that to Demeter obviously stands in intimate relationship to the Eleusinian Mysteries, while that to Apollo contains a vivid depiction of the Delian festival at which the poet is participating."[27] The link between *Hymn* and ritual is important for this analysis. The longer *Hymns* present a specific picture of communication between mortals and immortals within their narrative, and are also in their performance a type of communication between actual mortals and the gods.

III. Performative Context

Performance is a popular topic both in itself and as a category for study within other fields. The term means many things to scholars in many different contexts. I will focus on three definitions here, leaving aside for the moment the aspects of performance in ritual. One, performance can be the display of a skill for an audience. The audience is the key point here, even if one makes the rhetorical move towards the self as audience. Two, performance may mean or indicate the success of an action. A student's

[27] West (2003) p. 6.

performance in a given class would fall into this category. The student is in one sense performing a skill for an audience, the teacher, but the linguistic weight of this third meaning is in the outside judgment by that audience. Three, performance can be enacted in patterned behavior, such as an actor playing a role. This behavior may include the same individual actions as everyday behavior, as when an actor in the course of his or her role "eats" or "sleeps." The key distinction here is the separation between self and role.[28]

These three terms are all applicable to the recitation of a *Hymn*. First, the *rhapsode* would perform the *Hymn* either as the *prooimion* to a recitation of epic poetry or in the case of the longer *Hymns*, possibly, on its own. The *rhapsode* would display his skill in his recitation (and possibly his composition or embellishment) for an audience. The performance of the *rhapsode* would often be judged by that audience, fulfilling the second definition.[29] That the *Hymns* were, at least occasionally, performed in a competitive setting is demonstrated by the poet's plea to Aphrodite in *Hymn* 6 to "grant me victory in this contest and order my singing."

The third definition, "patterned behavior," correlates to the ritual setting of the recitation of the *Hymns*. The *Hymns* were composed for and performed at festivals. As such they mimic some of the patterns from ritual. The invocation of the god at the opening of most of the *Hymns* is an example of this.[30] The notion that the *Hymns* were performed at festivals has been called into question by recent scholarship, especially that

[28] Carlson (2004). See Werthen (2003) and Bell (2003).

[29] On the performance of the *Hymns*, see Depew (2000) and Bremmer (1981).

[30] Bergren (1982).

of Jenny Strauss Clay, who instead posits the symposium as the locus of performance.[31] This performative context supports Clay's argument that the *Hymns'* composers were creating, through medium of the *Hymns*, a unifying, Pan-Hellenic, view of the gods. For the *Hymns* to function in this way, they would need to be free from any particular location or festival. While I agree that some of the *Hymns* may have been performed at several similar festivals, and that the poet may have even composed them with the intention that they could be reused, I do not agree that they could have been composed unattached from any festival or even with the specific intention of applying to a wide variety of festivals. Sarah Iles Johnston argues that the effect of the *Hymns* on Pan-Hellenism, while feasible, was incidental to the composition, rather than intentional.[32] The *Hymns* themselves contain too many specific references to both places and ritual acts to be entirely independent from those places or rituals.[33]

The *Hymn to Demeter* and the *Hymn to Apollo* have explicit references, which modern scholars believe they can link to specific locations or festivals. However, not all scholars agree to which festival we ought to link a given *Hymn*. For example, the *Hymn to Demeter* is most often linked to Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries, due to the interval that Demeter spends at Eleusis and the "rites" she establishes there, at the end of the *Hymn*.[34] However, Kevin Clinton has posited a different festival, the Thesmophoria,

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[31] Clay (1989) p. 7.

[32] Johnston (2002) p. 111.

[33] I discuss how each of the five major *Hymns* relates to ritual in Chapter Four.

[34] See Richardson (1974) pp. 12-30, West (2003) pp. 7-9, and Foley (1993) pp. 84-97.

as the performative setting for the *Hymn to Demeter*.[35] While the Thesmophoria is as problematic, if not more so, than the Eleusinian Mysteries as a locus of performance for the *Hymn,* Clinton does raise legitimate objections to the assumption of an Eleusinian link. The *Hymn to Apollo* has also sparked strong debates. Both a Delian and a Delphic link have been proposed, with some proponents suggesting two *Hymns*, one for each location, which have been joined together subsequently.[36] Finally, the *Hymns to Aphrodite* and to *Hermes* have no explicit link to festivals in their narratives.[37]

I shall proceed on the commonly accepted assumption that, regardless of the festival to which any given *Hymn* was linked, they were in fact *performed* for an audience. If the *Hymns were* performed in a private context (i.e. Clay) it was not their primary or intended location. The public performance of the *Hymns* would have, in ancient Greek culture, constituted a ritual setting, no matter the specific festival or

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[35] Clinton (1986) 43-49.

[36] R. Janko (1981) makes an argument for a single composition of the *Hymn,* see Janko (1981), Miller (1979), Burkert (2001), West (2003), and Richardson (2009). For separate Delian and Pythian hymn see Ruhnken (1782), Drerup (1937), and Chappell (2006). See also discussion in Chapter Four.

[37] The *Hymn to Aphrodite* it has been suggested was composed to celebrate the royal house of the Aeneadae in the Troad. See West (2003). This view has been challenged by Smith (1981). Faulker (2004) does not discuss the performative context of the *Hymn to Aphrodite* beyond its possible function as a *prooimion*. The *Hymn to Hermes* has been linked to Athens, Boetia and Arcadia. West (2003) puts its performance at Olympia p. 14. Johnston (2002) links the *Hymn to Hermes* to athletic contests (*Hermaia*). For more see Chapter Four.

occasion.[38] And in fact, even the *symposia*, which Clay posits for the *Hymns'* performance, were cultic acts.

This context, the public and ritual setting, needs to be considered when analyzing the *Hymns*, especially when analyzing them as literature. On the one hand, the *Hymns*, due to their close relation to Homer and thus to the epic genre (what motivates Clay, in fact, to place their performance as being during *symposia* and within the ambit of epic) have been treated as literature and often in these situations their religious function(s) have been ignored. On the other hand, historians of religion, when examining the *Hymns* have tended to ignore their literary aspects.

Owing to the *Hymns* unique status as both literary works and cultic objects any examination of them must include both their narrative and cultic aspects. Claude Calame, in his article "Variations, énonciatives, relations avec les dieux et fonctions poétiques dans les *Hymnes* Homériques," stresses how the *Homeric Hymns* differ from other hymns; for example they include no formal petitions to the gods they celebrate.[39] Calame posits that this is because they were created for narrative performance during a festival, a setting in which the god is expected to take pleasure. Such a hymn is primarily a gift to the god, just as sacrifices are, and the higher its literary polish, the more extended its *pars epica*, the likelier it is to succeed in pleasing the recipient. In other words, implicit to Calame's analysis is recognition that the hymn must be both a literary work

[38] See Depew (2000) and Calame (1995). Stehle, (1997, pp. 174-212), also bases her analysis on the presumption that the *Hymns* were performed.

[39] Calame (1995).

and a cultic object. What better to serve such a dual purpose than a hymn that narrates a myth?[40]

Two works in particular have taken this approach to Greek literature and Greek hymns respectively. Eva Stehle in her 1997 book, *Performance and Gender in Ancient Greece: Non-Dramatic Poetry in its Setting*, investigated the question of what narration of any kind accomplished within a public, ritualized setting. Stehle is not concerned with myth *per se*, although most of her examples, taken from the archaic and classical periods, did of course involve narration of myth to some degree. Rather, she is interested in the effect that performative poetry in general had upon the communities that constituted its audiences. Stehle comments on how poets simultaneously reflect and mold communal values. Myths often, as Stehle argues, provide the reflection of communal values. The poets' choices of local myths, for example, allow them to gain the alliance or sympathy of their audience. On the other hand, the introduction of new elements to a familiar, local, myth can in turn mold the values of the community.

In her recent book, *Singing for the Gods: Performances of Myth and Ritual in Archaic and Classical Greece*, Barbara Kowalzig looks at the public, ritualized setting for hymns.[41] Kowalzig, like Stehle, makes an argument about the effect of hymns on community. Kowalzig argues that the interplay of myth and ritual in hymns work to

[40] Johnston, "Revisiting Myth and Ritual," delivered October 2008.

[41] Kowalzing (2007) examines choral performances. The *Homeric Hymns*, as discussed earlier, were performed by a lone *rhapsode* and do not fall into her category or study.

define, redefine, and negotiate group identity and power relations. That is, they both reflect and re-create that identity.

Stehle and Kowalzig are concerned with what effects the narratives, performed in ritual settings, have on human institutions and on human relations. However, the ritual setting begs the questions: what do these narratives have to say about religion? What does a narrative, especially a narrative about a god and addressed to a god, such as the *Homeric Hymns*, have to say about the relationship between humans and gods?

It is my thesis that the *Hymns* present for their audience a lesson about the relationship between gods and humans, specifically about the problems surrounding communication. That is all the longer *Hymns* are about communication. In a performative setting the *Hymns* communicate with both the gods and the audience.[42] However, the *Hymns* are a paradox as the myths, narrated within the cultic objects that are the *Hymns*, contain embedded in their narrative two types of communication between mortals and anthropomorphic gods: speech and ritual moments. Both of these embedded types of communications are evident to the external audience of the *Hymn*, during its performance. However, only one type of communication, that is the communication enacted in ritual moments, is successful. Thus the performance of the *Hymns* in oral form, ought to, by the *Hymns* own argument, be unsuccessful, but their performance during ritual, ought to guarantee their success. The end result of this paradox is that both the human and the divine audience can observe and learn about the problems and

[42] See Bergren (1982) for a discussion on the invocation of the gods in the *Homeric Hymns*.

solutions to communication from the *Hymns*, both as outside observers and active participants.

What is the problem or difficulty with this type of communication? Communication by speech between anthropomorphic gods and mortals within the narrative is always, ultimately, unsuccessful. Communication based upon ritual acts succeeds. It is in this way that the *Hymns* mediate between myth and ritual for the audience, using the interplay of the two to say more than either could independently, to teach the audience, both mortal and immortal, about communication.

The next question is what is it that needs to be explained or taught? Why is the mediation of the *Hymns* necessary? As we will see, it is anthropomorphism that causes problems. The first such problem is how the inappropriate behavior of the gods in Greek myth, as represented in narrations such as those we see in the *Hymns*, could legitimately reflect the Greek system of belief. Paul Veyne's book, *Did the Greeks Believe in their Myths*, demonstrates one way modern scholars have dealt with this issue, which will be examined in the next section.[43] The second problem created by anthropomorphism is that of the *body* being used as the basis of understanding upon which communication is based. The work of both Jean-Pierre Vernant and Pascal Boyer, which address this issue of the anthropomorphic body from widely differing angles, will be examined in the following section.

[43] Veyne (1983).

## IV. Behaviors of the Gods: Modern and Ancient Critiques

### A. Introduction

Walter Burkert designates myth and ritual as the two "forms in which Greek religion presents itself to the historian of religion."[44] Burkert then describes myth in the following way:

> Myth, a complex of traditional tales, has more to say of these gods, but among the Greeks these tales are always taken with a pinch of salt: the truth of a myth is never guaranteed and does not have to be believed. But quite apart from the fact that mythology is at first the sole explicit form of intellectual activity and the sole mode of coming to terms with reality, the importance of the myths of the gods lies in their connection with the sacred rituals for which they frequently provide a reason, and aetiology, which is often playfully elaborated.[45]

Burkert, here, links the importance of myth to ritual. Myths explain rituals. For Burkert this is a self-evident part of Greek religion and the link between myth and ritual does not need to be explicit. For Burkert it doesn't matter whether it is a performance of Homer with few overt links to the performance of a specific ritual or a mythic narration during the performance of a ritual, the importance of the myth, for Greek religion, is still its link to ritual. This problem of the specific relationship between myth and ritual has preoccupied historians of religion (see above, Myth and Ritual). I do not intend to offer a theory about myth and ritual[46] as a whole, but instead wish to focus on that "pinch of salt" that needs to accompany Greek myth. What is it about Greek myth that causes us to qualify it, as allegorical or symbolic, before allowing it a place within "real" religion?

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[44] Burkert (1985) p. 8.

[45] Burkert (1985) pp. 8-9.

[46] See Burkert (1985) pp. 2-4.

Why does religion get reduced to practice, to the detriment of the narrative content that accompanied those practices?

The main difficulty in relating myth and "real" religion, for both ancient thinkers and modern scholars, is the human behavior of the anthropomorphic gods and how it did or even *could* relate to belief. Some of the behaviors of the gods, in myth, are not what someone (either modern critic, ancient critic or, presumably, ancient "believer") might expect of a god. Paul Veyne's *Did the Greeks Believe in their Myths* explores the problem of belief and at one point expresses the problem as being which parts of myth to believe.

> There is a problem, then, that we cannot avoid: Did the Greeks believe in these tales? More specifically, did they distinguish between what they held as authentic - the historicity of the Trojan War or the existence of Agamemnon and Zeus - and the obvious inventions of the poet, who desired to please his audience? Did they listen with the same ear to the geographical lists and catalogues of ships and to the tale, worthy of Boccaccio, of the amorous adventures of Aphrodite and Ares caught in bed by her husband? If they really believed in myth, did they at least know how to distinguish fable from fiction?[47]

Within this quote, Veyne is discussing something different than the improbability of gods acting in certain fashions (or of people believing in and worshipping gods who acted this way). However his example of "poetic invention" - the love affair of Ares and Aphrodite - is exactly the sort of characterization of the gods in myth that causes the most concern for scholars of Greek religion[48] and for ancient authors, e.g. Plato, as I will discuss below.

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[47] Veyne (1983) p. 20.

[48] Veyne is not placing a value on the two types of information he posits here, the geographical information/catalogue v. the love affair *because* the love affair is an example of what I would call

The gods, as represented in the *Homeric Hymns*, are not as problematic as those found in Homer and Hesiod. I propose that this is due, in a large part, to the focus on ritual within the *Hymns* – ritual which, as I argue, is the basis of successful communication. Since each *Hymn* ends with some form of resolution in the communication between god and humans, the behaviors of the gods within the narrative lead up to this resolution and are both accountable to and explained by it. However, although the *Hymns* do not depict the gods in as morally difficult (for us) situations, they are still the same anthropomorphic gods as found in Homer and Hesiod. They still, during their interactions with mortals, assume the shape of humans and struggle to maintain that fiction in order to communicate.

As we shall see, the problem lies in the acts of the gods that defy or violate the limits of their anthropomorphically conceived bodies. The god, when he or she makes obvious or visible his or her godhood, necessarily violates the common ground (i.e. the anthropomorphic body) upon which understanding between mortal and immortal has been built. As my model will show, it is actually the *violation* that makes the god recognizable.

B. The Anthropomorphic Bodies of the Gods

Anthropomorphism is not a necessary part of any given religion. Other cultures have developed belief systems with aniconic deities (Judaism, Islam, and Christianity),

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inappropriate behavior for the gods. Instead, he is drawing a distinction between information known from history and what he calls the "inventions of the poet."

theriomorphic deities (Egyptian, Native American, Hinduism) or even non-physical doctrines (Taoism). However, for the ancient Greeks during the time period when Homeric literature (the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* and the *Homeric Hymns*) developed, the anthropomorphic representation of the gods was a fundamental part of their system of beliefs. This anthropomorphic conception of the gods was supplied mainly through literature but was also supplemented by visual representations of the gods and their stories, including but not limited to sculpture and vase paintings.[49]

One aspect of the visual representation of the anthropomorphic gods has had particular impact on the development of the arguments surrounding anthropomorphism. The problems of idolatry, specifically in the form of worship of cult statues, have long been at the center of discussions of ancient Greek beliefs and anthropomorphism.[50]

Clifford Ando's *The Matter of the Gods: Religion and the Roman Empire* has a useful summary of the problem. Ando shows how our ancient evidence, including fragments from both Xenophanes and Heraclitus, have been used, by Christian authors, mainly in discussions centering on issues of idolatry. The ancient use of these sources influences the ways they have been received by modern scholars.

> Even the limited fragments that we now possess reveal Presocratic philosophers to have been absorbed with the issues that were to exercise Augustine, albeit in different formulations and on the basis of different postulates and preoccupation. Xenophanes' famous attack on anthropomorphism, for example, censured it as more than a strategy of representation. Of course, he argued, cattle that could draw would draw gods that looked like cattle, as humans

[49] Images identifiable as gods and heroes date from around 700 BCE, see Schefold (1964) and Fittschen (1969).

[50] See Donahue (1997).

> drew gods with human forms; but anthropomorphism also concretized theological and metaphysical presuppositions of far greater moment, of which the joke about cattle and horses and lions was merely a reduction ad absurdum. .[51] And although Heraclitus attacked the forms of contemporary religious ritual with particular vehemence, like Xenophanes he did so because he believed that ritual expressed beliefs that he found insupportable. Insisting that idols as material objects had the same metaphysical status as other such objects - he likened praying to a statue to conversing with one's house - he lamented that devotees of idols did not understand the true nature of the gods.[52]
>
> It was Plato, not surprisingly, who exercised the greatest influence on the critique of idolatry. He might have expected to do so through his attack on the immorality of traditional mythopoiesis, but those sections of the *Republic* were largely ignored until their arguments and their data were appropriated by Christian apologists of the second century and beyond.[53] Rather, it was his complex subordination of representation and epistemology to metaphysics that sounded the death knell for sympathetic appreciations of idolatrous religiosity among later intellectuals, both pagan and Christian.[54]

Ando here is moving his argument towards a discussion of Plato's influence on later ideas of the gods, particularly through expectations created by ideas of *representation*. However, it is important to stop and flesh out the references to Xenophanes and Heraclitus.

Ando says that Xenophanes' attack on anthropomorphism "censured it as more than a strategy of representation." Xenophanes' censure was not about, or at least not just about, issues of idolatry, a term that was not in use until several hundred years later at

[51] Xenophanes frr. 166-69 KRS (Clement *Strom*. 5.109.2).

[52] Heraclitus fr. 241 KRS.

[53] Weinstock (1926).

[54] Ando (2008) pp. 27-28.

any rate.[55] Xenophanes was critiquing the entire project of anthropomorphism and more specifically immorality of the gods as represented in Homer and Hesiod. "The god is not similar to mortal men in either shape or thought. He is immovable, for it is not fitting for him to go now hither, now thither."[56] Thus, for the first time, speaking about the divine is dominated by postulates of what is fitting.[57]

Likewise, Heraclitus, as Ando indicates, is more concerned with the "nature of the gods" than with idolatry. His famous quote, used by advocates and opponents of idolatry alike, is an example, for him, of worshippers' ignorance about the gods - an ignorance resulting from anthropomorphic beliefs.

Finally, Ando's reference to Plato's attack on the "immorality of traditional mythopoiesis" should not be overlooked. This attack, so to speak, is the best example from the ancient world of the very anxiety about the actions and characterizations of the gods discussed above. In the *Republic*, Plato's Socrates outlines what sorts of examples, including poetry, to which it is proper to expose members of the utopian state. The Homeric gods are inappropriate, as are the heroes, since the behavior of the gods (and heroes) often provide negative or unworthy examples to the audience who then might imitate them. This is the moral judgment passed on the traditional depiction of the gods,

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[55] "The compound, first attested in the letters of Paul, derives from Greek `eidwlwn` + `latreia`; in Greek (and often in Latin) it long remained uncontracted: `eidwlwlolatria` - idololatria (Ando, 2008, p. 4 fn 12). See Waszink and van Winden (1987) pp. 73-79.

[56] B 26; Jaeger 275.

[57] Burkert (1985) p. 308.

which I discussed above as a problem for modern thinkers as opposed to ancient believers. I would place Plato, here, within the modern group. For an example of this sort of judgment regarding the gods and their behavior, I return to Apollo, and Plato's Socrates who quotes Aeschylus (Frag. 350):

> Nor [shall we approve] of Aischylos, when his Thetis says that Apollo singing at her wedding "foretold the happy issue of her children"[58]
>
> and their long life free from pain and sickness,
> And saying how fortunate I was and blessed by the gods,
> he sang the paean, pleasing my heart.
> And I since Phoebus is a god and filled with the skill of prophecy,
> expected his words to be true.
> But he himself, despite singing, despite sharing in our feast
> despite saying all these things, it is he, himself,
> who has killed my son.
>
> οὐδὲ Αἰσχύλου, ὅταν φῇ ἡ Θέτις τὸν Ἀπόλλω ἐν τοῖς αὑτῆς γάμοις ᾄδοντα ἐνδατεῖσθαι τὰς ἐὰς εὐπαιδίας—
>
> > νόσων τ' ἀπείρους καὶ μακραίωνας βίους,
> > ξύμπαντά τ' εἰπὼν θεοφιλεῖς ἐμὰς τύχας
> > παιᾶν' ἐπηυφήμησεν, εὐθυμῶν ἐμέ.
> > κἀγὼ τὸ Φοίβου θεῖον ἀψευδὲς στόμα
> > ἤλπιζον εἶναι, μαντικῇ βρύον τέχνῃ·
> > ὁ δ', αὐτὸς ὑμνῶν, αὐτὸς ἐν θοίνῃ παρών,
> > αὐτὸς τάδ' εἰπών, αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ κτανὼν
> > τὸν παῖδα τὸν ἐμόν
>
> (*Republic* 2.383b)

The quote from Aeschylus is spoken by Thetis and is about Apollo slaying her son, Achilles. We see here that representing the god Apollo as deceptive is problematic once the gods are judged based on "what is fitting." Plato's interlocutor responds with the following.

[58] Plato quoting *Iliad*, 2.1.

"Whenever anyone says that sort of thing about the gods, we shall be angry with him and we will refuse him a chorus. Nor will we let teachers use him for the education of the youth, if our guardians are to be god-fearing and god-like however much that is possible for humans."

"By all means," he said, "I accept these norms and would use them as canons and laws."

"This is the sort of thing," I said, "we ought to allow or not allow them to hear about the gods strait from childhood if they are to honor the god and their parents and not treat their friendships with one another lightly."

ὅταν τις τοιαῦτα λέγῃ περὶ θεῶν, χαλεπανοῦμέν τε καὶ χορὸν οὐ δώσομεν, οὐδὲ τοὺς διδασκάλους ἐάσομεν ἐπὶ παιδείᾳ χρῆσθαι τῶν νέων, εἰ μέλλουσιν ἡμῖν οἱ φύλακες θεοσεβεῖς τε καὶ θεῖοι γίγνεσθαι, καθ' ὅσον ἀνθρώπῳ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον οἷόν τε.

Παντάπασιν, ἔφη, ἔγωγε τοὺς τύπους τούτους συγχωρῶ, καὶ ὡς νόμοις ἂν χρῴμην.

Τὰ μὲν δὴ περὶ θεούς, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, τοιαῦτ' ἄττα, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἀκουστέον τε καὶ οὐκ ἀκουστέον εὐθὺς ἐκ παίδων τοῖς θεούς τε τιμήσουσιν καὶ γονέας τήν τε ἀλλήλων φιλίαν μὴ περὶ σμικροῦ ποιησομένοις.

(*Republic* 2.383c-3.386a )

Plato is, if not our earliest, at least our best example for arguments to delineate (some) myth from ritual and what some might call "real" religion. Plato rejects the portions of myth which are, in his opinion, inappropriate for education, but does not reject myth entirely and, in fact, creates his own where it is useful. The Myth of Er, in the *Republic*, is a creation by Plato, meant to teach the proper objective for one's life – philosophy. Plato (and Xenophanes) do not reject myth outright, but seek to censor it in the interest of their own philosophy. However, the texts that formed the basis for the anthropomorphic gods, such as the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Homeric Hymns*, are all earlier than this philosophizing tradition. Plato inherits, builds upon, censors, and reacts to their tradition, and we ourselves inherit Plato. But to discuss "what the Greeks really believed" as regards their anthropomorphic representation of the gods we will need to

move away from these conceptions of the gods. This is a difficult thing to do, as we are all students of Plato whether we realize it or not.

The analysis of the anthropomorphic gods, in this paper, will begin from a new model based on cognitive science. This model moves away from ideas of truth or appropriateness and instead focuses on the limits that define something, in this case a god. Using cognitive science, we can discuss how the human mind creates and reacts to religious conceptions from a different angle. From this angle we can then attempt to answer the questions raised above about why the anthropomorphic gods, and specifically their communications with mortals, are represented in certain ways. The rest of this chapter will lay out the model from cognitive science that will be used and will demonstrate how it can be applied to the Greek gods.

## V. Anthropomorphism through the Lens of Cognitive Science

Cognitive science, as a field, draws heavily on both philosophy and psychology. The term is as recent as 1973 and was coined by Christopher Longuet-Higgins. Generally speaking, the term cognitive science refers to studies that analyze the nature of human knowledge.[59] It can be applied to objective or subjective information, but in either instance, cognitive science provides a model for organizing information and predicting outcomes. This scientific approach to data about religion can lead researchers to new and exciting ideas. However, cognitive science has not been sufficiently utilized

[59] Boyer characterizes his approach as relying both on cognitive science and cognitive psychology. See (1997) p. 877 and (1992) p. 27.

as an approach to ancient religions. One reason for this is a preference by cognitive scientists for ethnographic over literary or material evidence, as discussed by Luther Martin.

> "Suggestions that the cognitive sciences might provide a theoretical foundation for the study of religions have appealed rather more to anthropologists than to historians of religion, and ethnographic data have more often been elicited than have historical materials to illustrate or to assess the analyses of and the predictions about religion by cognitive theorists (e.g., Guthrie 1980, 1993; Sperber 1975, 1996; Boyer 1994, 2001; Whitehouse 1995, 2000; Atran 2002).[60]

It is the influence of the hard sciences upon cognitive science and its practitioners that leads to this preference. The ability to control the means of collecting data, to minimize external and internal variables, and to retest the results made from them gives preference to a source of data that is not locked years in the past. Because history lends itself to us only through selected lenses, through texts and material remains, it removes this sort of control from the scientists who wish to approach the material.

However, whatever challenges history may pose to cognitive science, I think that cognitive science can offer new insight to both our approach and our overall understanding. I propose to use a "cognitive" model of religion, based on work by Pascal Boyer, to analyze the anthropomorphic conception of the gods by the ancient Greeks. I will focus my examination on the "Homeric" image, drawing some examples from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, but focusing mostly on the *Homeric Hymns*.

[60] Martin (2004) pp. 7-8.

Pascal Boyer uses cognitive science in his 1999 book, *Religion Explained*.[61] Boyer is quite literally advocating an explanation for human religion that he promises will account for belief systems the world over. Although Boyer's book does not focus on anthropomorphism, it provides a model for supernatural beliefs into which anthropomorphism also fits. The model is a useful starting point for analyzing the conditions and effects of the ancient Greek system for conceptualizing the gods. This approach has not been, to the best of my knowledge, previously applied to Greek Religion.

Boyer describes religious beliefs in terms of *concepts*, arrived at by using *inferences* based on *templates*. The mind, he argues, is *not* a blank slate into which new information is placed and stored to be retrieved in that exact form at some later date.

> Minds that acquire knowledge are not empty containers into which experience and teaching pour predigested information. A mind needs and generally has some way of organizing information to make sense of what is observed and learned. This allows the mind to go beyond the information given, or in the jargon, to produce *inferences* on the basis of information given.[62]

The *inferences* are created about various topics, called *concepts* by Boyer. These *inferences* are based on *templates.* The mind places information received into these *templates*, produces/employs various *inferences*, and arrives at a new set of definitions for a *concept.* Throughout this section the technical terms from Boyer will be italicized:

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[61] First published in 1999. The bibliography lists the second publication of 2001. Boyer's earlier publications contain many of these same ideas. See esp. *The Naturalness of Religious Ideas: A Cognitive Theory of Religion* (1994), "What Makes Anthropomorphism Natural: Intuitive Ontology and Cultural Representations" (1996), and "Explaining Religious Ideas: Elements of a Cognitive Approach" (1992).

[62] Boyer (2001) p. 42.

*inference*, *concept* and *template*, except for the ontological categories, which will be in all capitals: PERSON, TOOL, NATRUAL OBJECT, etc. The following example from Boyer will illustrate how a child, when presented with a new *concept* utilizes *templates* and *inferences*.

> To illustrate this: A child is shown a new animal, say a walrus, and told the name for the species. What the child does - unconsciously of course - is add a new entry to her mental "encyclopedia," an entry marked "walrus" that probably includes a description of shape. Over the years this entry may become richer as new facts and experiences provide more information about walruses. As I said above, we also know that the child spontaneously adds some information to that entry, whether we tell her or not. For instance, if she sees a walrus give birth to live cubs, she will conclude that this is the way all walruses have babies. You do not need to tell her that "all walruses reproduce that way." Why is that so? The child has created a "walrus" *concept* by using the ANIMAL *template*. [63]

The mind processes information using *templates*, which are ontological categories such as TOOL or ANIMAL. The following chart recaps this for the walrus example in a more visual way:

| *Template* | | | *Concept* |
|---|---|---|---|
| ANIMAL | | | Walrus |
| Characteristics: | | | |
| eat | → | *inferences* = | eat |
| sleep | | | sleep |
| give birth in the same way | | | always birth live cubs |

Figure 1. Boyer's model applied to a walrus.

[63] Boyer (2001) p. 42.

Let us create our own example, this time from the TOOL category. If a subject were shown a new object and told only that it was a TOOL, just like a child, the subject would be forced to rely on his/her organizational system of *templates* in order to generate information about and to understand what the object was. Let us call this imaginary TOOL a "whatzit."

The subject's first step would be to match what he/she knows about the category TOOL to what he/she can observe. For example, a TOOL is something used by humans. It can often be bought in a hardware store. It makes work easier. It is made out of metal, or wood, or plastic, etc.

| *Template* TOOL | | *Concept* "whatzit" |
|---|---|---|
| Characteristics: | | |
| usually used by humans→<br>usually bought in store<br>makes work easier<br>made out of metal/wood/plastic<br>inanimate | *inferences* = | usually used by humans<br>usually bought in a store<br>makes work easier<br>made out of metal/wood/plastic<br>inanimate |

Figure 2. Boyer's model applied to an imaginary object.

The mind would process all these options, and many more, all without the subject intentionally activating this system. The subject cannot be sure of the accuracy of any inferences, but because of the activation of a *template* he/she knows what sort of questions to ask, and how to understand any new information that might be given. For

example, having been told that the "whatzit" is a TOOL, the first question most would ask is likely to be, "what does it do?" This question would make the concept more specific by adding detail to the concept, how it "makes work easier" or even "how it is used by humans." But it is only because the subject can organize what little information he/she has within *templates* that he/she knew what sort of question to ask.

Having established the idea of *templates* as the mind's method of processing and organizing information, Boyer argues that the human mind is predisposed to favor certain *concepts*.

> Some concepts happen to connect with inference systems in the brain in a way that makes recall and communication very easy. Some concepts happen to trigger our emotional programs in particular ways. Some concepts happen to connect to our social mind. Some of them are represented in such a way that they soon become plausible and direct behavior. The ones that do *all* this are the religious ones we actually observe in human societies. They are most successful because they combine features relevant to a variety of mental systems.[64]

Here Boyer is explaining the phenomenon of similarities of belief and/or practice between religions cross culturally. His model describes a situation where any belief could (and probably does) occur to someone, somewhere, at sometime. However, only the beliefs to which the human mind is predisposed gain legitimacy *over a geographic area* and time. For example, the idea of a dying and rising god is present in many cultures. Following Boyer's model, this would be explained by the fact that this *concept* triggers a variety of programs in the human psyche.[65]

My project focuses on the *concept* of anthropomorphism. I do not propose to analyze the emotional appeal of anthropomorphism or to examine how it is relevant to

[64] Boyer (2001) p. 50.

[65] Boyer (2001) pp. 34-37.

various mental systems. I am not attempting to make broad claims for cognitive science or religion as a whole. Instead, using Boyer's cognitive model, I propose to explore and to account for the characterizations of the gods in Greek myth in terms of their anthropomorphism, specifically their bodies and their bodily limits and how this relates to issues of communication and understanding. Because I see the anthropomorphic nature of the gods as the key issue in how communications between gods and mortals is represented in narratives, it is necessary to look more closely at the *templates* used by Boyer in his approach and how anthropomorphism fits into his model.

Boyer predicates six basic *templates*: ANIMAL, TOOL, PERSON, NATURAL OBJECT, NUMBER, and PLANT. Each of these *templates* follows certain rules. The "walrus" example above demonstrated some of the rules for the *template* ANIMAL, such as the fact that they *do* reproduce and they all reproduce in the same way, every time. The description of *templates* is not a scientific one designed to create correct responses for all situations. Instead, it describes the system the mind uses to create expectations, which can then be confirmed or violated.

The violated *template* is what creates a supernatural *concept.* A supernatural *concept* involves the violation of expectations either physical or mental. That is, a supernatural mountain might violate its template [NATURAL OBJECT] by having physiological processes, such as Boyer's example of the Aymara people who believe in a certain mountain which "bleeds and also feeds on the meat of sacrificed animals that are left in particular places."[66] The mountain is supernatural insofar as it "bleeds" and also

[66] Boyer (2001) p. 65.

insofar as it "feeds." But the mountain would fit the template NATURAL OBJECT and the specific concept of mountain in every other way. That is, the mountain would still look like a mountain in all its physical details. It is made of rock. It would remain stationary. It would not speak or laugh or cry. In fact, every expectation (as the examples of characteristics below demonstrate) created by the template "mountain" would hold except for the specific violations "bleeds" and "feeds," which make that particular mountain supernatural.

| ***Template*** | | ***Concept*** | | ***Supernatural Concept*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NATURAL OBJECT | | Mountain | | Aymaran Mtn. |
| Characteristics: | | | | |
| stationary | → *inferences* = | stationary | = | stationary |
| made of natural material | | made of rock | = | made of rock |
| does not eat | | does not eat | ≠ | eats |
| does not bleed | | does not bleed | ≠ | bleeds |

Figure 3. Boyer's model applied to the supernatural concept Aymaran Mountain.

Let us look at another supernatural concept, zombies. A zombie is a supernatural concept created by a violation of the *template* PERSON. A zombie has all the same physiological properties of a PERSON, such as arms, legs, eyes and ears. A zombie can move somewhat like a person. However, a zombie cannot control its mind and, moreover, its body, although mobile, is dead! A zombie is a PERSON with violations of the cognitive expectation.

Once a supernatural concept is created through the violation of the *template, secondary inferences* are created about the supernatural concept from the violation of the template. For example, if you are told that "counterintuitive ebony trees have the special feature that they can [hear] what people say,"[67] then certain inferences are necessary to make that a workable *concept*. "If the trees heard conversations but could not remember them or if they remembered conversations that had never actually happened, the concept would probably not be that successful"[68] as a religious belief and would consequently not gain legitimacy.

A final point is that there is a limit on violations to the *template* and the *inferences* drawn about the violated *template*. "The religious concept preserves all the relevant default *inferences* except the ones that are explicitly barred by the counterintuitive element."[69] That is to say, once a certain template is activated, all the information and inferences drawn from that category *will* apply, except in the specific domain of the violation. Boyer gives the example of a ghost which falls into the template of PERSON with a physiological violation.

> The concept is that of a PERSON who has counterintuitive physical properties. Unlike other persons, ghosts can go through solid objects like walls. But notice that apart from this ability, ghosts follow very strictly the ordinary intuitive concept of PERSON. Imagine a ghost suddenly materializes in your home […]. For instance, you assume that the ghost *saw* you were having dinner, so she now *knows* that you were eating. Also, the ghost probably *heard* the sound of your spoon landing in the soup and can now *remember* that you dropped it…[70]

[67] Boyer (2001) p. 71.

[68] Boyer (2001) p. 71.

[69] Boyer (2001) p. 73.

[70] Boyer (2001) p. 73.

In summary, then, what Boyer gives us is a model for describing how the mind creates, receives, and evaluates supernatural *concepts*. First, a *template* is activated. Second, a violation of that *template* is introduced to create the supernatural. Finally, various *inferences* are drawn, both from the original *template* and from the violation that has been introduced. The *inferences* have to be sufficient to make the concept work (the ebony trees needed to be able to remember and disclose their information) and the *violations* need to be limited enough not to explode the original template (the ghost, like the example of the zombie, was in most ways still a PERSON).

Using Boyer's model then, we have a basic platform for examining Greek anthropomorphism and the various issues inherent in that system. Within the archaic Greek epic, PERSON is the *template*.[71] Any violation(s) of the *template* PERSON will then equal some supernatural concept. Taking this one step further, the moment that too many violations apply, the *concept* will no longer be viable.

How, therefore, do we deal with the many ways in which Greek gods violate the *template* PERSON? As individuals they violate it in many ways in different mythical accounts by demonstrating abilities humans do not have, including flight, shape-shifting, and knowledge of the future. But none of these are *the* violation of the template which created the label "god" for the group that was the pantheon of Greek gods. There is one "ability" which is universal to the gods and which defines, or, by its violation of the

[71] I take this as a given based the texts of Homer and Hesiod. While within material culture there is evidence of non-anthropomorphic representation of the gods, within literature and specifically when interacting with mortals, which is my focus, the gods best fit this *template*.

*template* PERSON creates, the supernatural concept. The violation of the template PERSON that defined a god as a god for the ancient Greeks was *immortality*. The Greek words themselves, *thanatoi* and *athanatoi*, indicating mortals and gods respectively, derive from the word *thanatos* meaning "death." A literal translation of the two terms would be, *thanatoi* "those that die" and *athanatoi* "those that do not die." This same construction is also reflected in the English terms "mortal" and "im-mortal."

The idea that immortality is what defines a god for the ancient Greeks is not a new one. J.P. Vernant in *Mortals and Immortals* posits the idea that for the ancient Greeks humans are modeled on the divine, but with the addition of the limit of death.

> "In this way, death not only stands out in the lives of mortals as the end that unremittingly limits the horizon of their existence: it is there every day, every moment, ensconced in life itself, like the hidden face of a condition of existence in which the two opposing positive and negative poles – being and its privation – are inextricably intertwined: no birth without death, no waking without sleep, no lucidity without unconsciousness, no tension without relaxation."[72]

Vernant's view on anthropomorphism is the inverse of Boyer's. Boyer claims a situation where people model the gods on themselves (using the template PERSON). Vernant posits that people are modeled on the divine, but come up short.

> "It is also necessary to correct the commonly held view that the anthropomorphism of the Greek gods means they were conceived in the image of human beings. It is rather the reverse: in all its active aspects, in all the components of its physical and psychological dynamism, the human body reflects the divine model as the inexhaustible source of a vital energy when, for an instant, the brilliance of divinity happens to fall on a mortal creature, illuminating him, as in a fleeting glow, with a little of that splendor that always clothes the body of a god."[73]

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[72] Vernant (1991) pp. 32-33.

[73] Vernant (1991) p. 36, as the Ionians on the island of Delos, *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*.

Vernant's description, when viewed through the cognitive model outlined above, pre-supposes some real thing out there, the divine, upon which people could actually be (or imagine themselves to be) modeled.[74] Or this is fancy rhetoric for "people imagine the gods in the image of human beings, but then portray themselves as defective gods." The difference between the two scholars is due to their different approaches and objectives. Vernant's reading is *emic* to ancient Greek culture and begins from assuming an ancient viewpoint that is the inverse of Boyer's, which is positioned, of course, within the *etic* world of the scholar examining religion. Further, Vernant is approaching the issue from the angle of the gods' bodies as a sign system for describing divine to human relationships. However, for the question of how the human mind creates and imagines the divine, Boyer and Vernant arrive at the same conclusion, that the category of PERSON is violated by the removal of mortality.[75]

This then, the removal of mortality, or immortality, is *the* violation that creates the supernatural concept of god from the *template* PERSON. As above, inferences can be drawn from the template about the concept, excepting the violation. The chart for Demeter would look like this.

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[74] For example Christianity, where God explicitly makes man in his image.

[75] Vernant's position, rephrased in Boyer's terminology, would claim the template DEITY, which is then violated by the introduction of mortality, creating man. While this may seem to contradict Boyer on the surface, a close examination shows that it is merely the same theory, inverted, due to the different nature of the projects and questions asked. Vernant is describing phenomena in Greek myth. Boyer is attempting to explain and universalize religious patterns.

| *Template* | | *Concept* | | *Supernatural Concept* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PERSON | | Woman | | Demeter |
| Characteristics: | | | | |
| has breasts | = | has breasts | = | has breasts |
| | | (capable of producing milk) | | |
| can reproduce | = | can reproduce | = | can reproduce |
| mortal | = | mortal | ≠ | immortal |

Figure 4. Boyer's model applied to Demeter.

Demeter displays all the attributes you would expect of a woman, excepting the *violation* of being immortal. I chose here, for illustrative purposes, two very female characteristics: the physical attribute of breasts and the function of childbearing. In both of these ways Demeter is like any woman. If we were to look at a male god, such as Hermes, as depicted in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, the *template* PERSON would remain the same, but the CONCEPT would become Baby.

| *Template* | | *Concept* | | *Supernatural Concept* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PERSON | | Baby | | Hermes |
| Characteristics: | | | | |
| eats | = | eats | = | eats (although ambrosia/nectar) |
| passes gas | = | passes gas | = | passes gas |
| can walk | = | will learn to walk | = | walks? |
| mortal | = | mortal | ≠ | immortal |

Figure 5. Boyer's model applied to Hermes.

These charts, to anyone even casually acquainted with Greek myth, have a gaping hole. Where is Hermes' ability to fly? Does that not also make him different from any baby? What about the fact that he *does* walk in the *Hymn*? No normal PERSON can do these. How then can the *violation* of the *template* be immortality and the rest of these differences be put to the side? These issues will be addressed in Chapter Two and Three.

## Conclusion

Thus, my project explores not how a certain myth and ritual might have arisen *pari passu*, but how a myth contained in a ritual object/performance (the *Hymns*) uses ritual references to advance its message, which I identify as the communication between gods and humans.

Chapters Two and Three examine the abilities and characterizations of the Greek gods using this model drawn from Boyer. Chapter Two examines the different abilities of Hermes, Dionysus, Demeter, Apollo and Aphrodite; how their skills are allocated and how the gods achieve certain ends using tools. Chapter Three examines the abilities of the gods which directly *violate* the *template* and the consequences of this *violation*. Finally, Chapter Four examines the specific moments of communication in the *Hymns*, both the unsuccessful, spoken, communication and the successful, ritual, communication.

# CHAPTER 2

# MAINTAINING THE HUMANITY OF THE GODS: A BALANCING ACT

## I. One *Violation* Too Many

The *violation* of the *template* PERSON by immortality creates the *supernatural concept* of "Greek gods," as I argued in the preceding chapter. However, immortality alone is not enough to create any god that would receive and imaginably respond to worship. The Greek gods had many attributes which made them different from and superior to their mortal counterparts. Each attribute displayed by a Greek god is a further *violation* of the *template* PERSON. A continual build up of *violations* would hinder or even, eventually, completely prevent the *inferences* drawn from the *template*. Once too many *violations* had occurred, the *template* would cease to help the subject to understand the *concept* and would need to be re-evaluated, changed or even discarded. Thus, the representation of the Greek gods seeks to keep the gods as close to the *template* PERSON as possible. It does this by both allocating the attributes of the gods which would *violate* the *template* among many different gods and by displacing the *violations* from the body through the use of tools. I will discuss these two techniques further below, but first it is necessary to establish why too many *violations* of the *template* would cause problems for the *inferences* drawn from it

Let us return to the example of the "whatzit" from Chapter One. A chart was produced using the *template* TOOL and demonstrating the *inferences* that could be drawn.

| ***Template*** | | ***Concept*** |
|---|---|---|
| TOOL | | "whatzit" |
| Characteristics: | | |
| usually used by humans→ | *inferences* = | usually used by humans |
| usually bought in store | | usually bought in a store |
| makes work easier | | makes work easier |
| made from metal/wood/plastic | | made from metal/wood/plastic |
| inanimate | | inanimate |

Figure 6. Boyer's model applied to an imaginary object.

When processing the new *concept* "whatzit" the subject activated the TOOL *template* and made *inferences* about the "whatzit." These *inferences* could then be shown to be either true or false. If too many of the *inferences* are false, or in other words, too many expectations are *violated*, the subject would have to re-evaluate the applicability of the *template*.

For example, the subject could attempt to determine more precisely the function of the "whatzit." He would assume, based on the *template*, that the "whatzit" can be used or operated by humans. If, however, upon picking up the "whatzit," the subject is bitten, the *template* would be violated. At this point, the *template* does not necessarily need to be switched or discarded. This *violation*, the first, creates a *supernatural concept*. The subject now has an animate, biting, TOOL. The subject would assume that any *inference*

which he had already drawn, including the one he was using to determine the function of the "whatzit," namely that it can be "used by humans," is still true and applicable.

However, if the "whatzit" also feels fury and squeaks, our subject would discover two more *violations* of the *template* from which he had been working. He had assumed that the "whatzit" was made of wood, metal, plastic, etc. but instead finds it to be flesh and fur. He had probably also assumed that the "whatzit" was silent, or at least that any noise it made would be as a result of human use. Instead, the "whatzit" has squeaked on its own.

At this point, the subject has realized that the original ontological category of TOOL was incorrect and has shifted to a different category - ANIMAL. He now has an entirely new approach to the object and an entirely new understanding of it. It is significant to notice that he would still approach the object through the model outlined in Chapter One. He has shifted categories of understanding within the model but he has not shifted to a new model entirely.

The attributes of the Greek gods also *violate* the *template* from which they are drawn (PERSON) beyond the basic *violation*, immortality. However, when presented with these *violations* the subject cannot merely shift to a new category in order to understand the *concept*. There is no cognitive category for GODS since *supernatural concepts* are the result of *violations* of other *ontological categories*.

Let us look at Apollo. In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo,* he is (often) characterized as a young man. He caries a bow and a lyre and is skilled in prophecy. These

characteristics of Apollo make him recognizable in both narratives and material representations of him. The chart for Apollo would look like this.

| ***Template*** | ***Concept*** | | ***Supernatural Concept*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| PERSON | Young Man | | Apollo |
| Characteristics: | | | |
| has human body | has human body | | has human body |
| can talk | can talk | | can talk |
| can use weapons | can use weapons | | can use weapons (esp. bow/arrows) |
| mortal | mortal | ≠ | immortal |

Figure 7. Boyer's model applied to Apollo.

The *concept* young man fits the category PERSON. Apollo corresponds to the *concept* of young man except for the *violation* immortality, which as discussed in Chapter One makes him a *supernatural concept*. However, what happens when a second *violation* occurs? At one point in the *Hymn*, Apollo appears to the Cretan sailors as a dolphin (399-404). This violates the inference in the chart listed as "has human body."

In the example of the "whatzit" the subject changed ontological categories for his *concept*, from TOOL to ANIMAL. That will not work here. Apollo cannot be classified as an ANIMAL with all the new inferences that would create and with the characteristics of the god which it would deny. Even in the form of a dolphin Apollo displays human intelligence and intent, linking him firmly to the *concept* of person. Apollo, even when in

the shape of an animal, is psychologically anthropomorphic. I will discuss psychological anthropomorphism in detail in section four of this chapter.

Apollo cannot be understood through any of the other ontological categories other than PERSON (ANIMAL, NATURAL OBJECT, NUMBER, OR PLANT, TOOL). However, why does it matter that Apollo fit any given *template* or the *template* PERSON, in particular? Recall the example of the "whatzit." When too many *violations* occurred and the subject realized that the *concept* no longer fits into the category TOOL, everything he had *inferred* about the "whatzit" was discarded to be replaced by new *inferences* based on the new *template*. This discarded information was what the subject had based his understanding of the "whatzit" on.

Likewise, for a *supernatural concept* like Apollo, understanding is based upon the information gained from *inferences*. The Greek gods are *supernatural concepts* derived from the *template* PERSON, the same *template* in which the humans themselves are classed. There is an assumption that any *concept* derived from the *template* PERSON will be like other humans. A Greek god in a narrative was assumed to be like humans (to an extent), to be limited by the bodies that they inhabit, and to generally bear out any inferences drawn about them from the *template* PERSON. Within narratives, all understanding of the other, for both mortals and gods, is represented as being based on these mutual characteristics, specifically those of the body. As will be shown in Chapter Four, when the *inferences* about the god that the mortal has made are shown to be false, mutual understanding, and thus, communication, ceases. The god has become unrecognizable as a PERSON. Therefore, the god has become *unreachable* by a person.

When the representation of the Greek gods is viewed through this model, the anthropomorphic characterization of the gods is revealed to be a technique to balance out the many and individual *violations* of the *template*. The characterizations of the gods work to keep each individual god as close to human as possible. The *violations* beyond immortality follow three patterns. First, attributes are allocated among many gods, creating the pantheon. This keeps the *violations* any one god can/will perform to a minimum. Second, when a god performs an action that a human (body) could not do, – I will refer to *violations* of this type as "direct" – he or she is often represented as having an outside object or tool to accomplish the task. Hermes sandals, Athena's *aegis* and Apollo's bow/arrows are all examples of such tools. Third, when a god performs an action that a human (body) could do, – I will refer to *violations* of this type as "indirect" – but performs it to an extent beyond what is humanly possible, the god is (often) described in the narrative with a negatively human characterization. This serves to balance the display of power. I propose that all such negative characterizations of the Greek gods in myth, even when there is no communication problem present, can be seen as a response to this issue.

These three methods of keeping the gods reconcilable to the *template* PERSON, ultimately, do not succeed. When a god, in a narrative, performs some action (direct or indirect) that violates the limits of their perceived body, it creates problems for the *template* from which the *supernatural concept* is derived and upon which understanding is based. The *template* becomes unrecognizable and ceases to provide information to the

subject. When the *template*, upon which understanding has been based and from which information has been derived, is put into doubt, communication breaks down.

To re-phrase this into the context of a familiar *topos* in Greek myth, when the god becomes obvious as a god within a narration communication between gods and mortals within that narrative will fail. This applies within my research to the *Homeric Hymns* in particular and to a large extent to archaic poetry in general. How the model might apply to narrations in general is beyond the scope of my argument. I will examine how it applies within the sphere of the *Hymns* in detail in Chapter Four, through a close reading of Metaneira's interruption of Demeter's efforts to make Demophoon immortal.

When the allocation of skills, the use of tools and, finally, the human-characterization of the god all fail to maintain the *template* (the shared locus of understanding) communication is re-established within the narrative through moments that reflect ritual. This will be the focus of the final chapter.

In the rest of this chapter, I will examine the allocation of skills among the pantheon and the indirect *violations* of the body that occur when the gods use objects or tools to accomplish their task. Direct *violations*, when the gods perform skills that humans could also perform (to some degree) will be the focus of Chapter Three.

## II. Allocation of Skills

There are multiple gods in the Greek pantheon. Each has individual attributes that make him or her distinct from the other gods. Attributes may on occasion overlap, for

example, both Apollo and Artemis are archers. However, each god is unique and uniquely suited for a given instance/appearance in a narrative.

It is because Greek myth presents the gods mainly through their interaction with mortals that they are portrayed in this multiplicity. The multiple possibilities for violating the *template* PERSON are spread among many different gods rather than contained in one god, who would necessarily be exceedingly different from anything which could be described by the *template* PERSON. The compartmentalization of divine attributes among many gods allows each god, as an individual, to retain many characteristics aligning with the *template* PERSON.

A. The Gods of the *Homeric Hymns*

The major *Homeric Hymns* deal with five gods: Dionysus, Demeter, Apollo, Hermes and Aphrodite. Each of these gods figures more-or-less prominently in the works of Homer and Hesiod, except Demeter and Dionysus, for whom most early literary information is provided by the *Hymns*. Each is also included in the lists of the Twelve Gods. Which gods make up the list of Twelve can vary. Charlotte Long argues that, "From the founding of the Altar of the Twelve Gods in 522/521 B.C.. to the closing of the Academy in A.D. 529, Greeks and later Romans recognized the Twelve as the chief gods of their pantheon."[76] Which gods are included in each list can and does vary from location to location and cult to cult, but each of the five gods of the longer *Homeric Hymns* is among the gods who can be included in the list.

[76] Long (1987) p. 142.

The *Hymn to Hermes* itself contains an aetiological reference to the Twelve Olympian gods. Hermes, after killing and roasting two of Apollo's cattle, divides the meat into twelve portions.

> Then
> Hermes happily drew off the rich cooking from the spits
> onto a smooth slab, and split it into twelve portions
> determined by lot, and assigned a fixed rank to each one.[77]

> αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
> Ἑρμῆς χαρμόφρων εἰρύσατο πίονα ἔργα
> λείῳ ἐπὶ πλαταμῶνι καὶ ἔσχισε δώδεκα μοίρας
> κληροπαλεῖς· τέλεον δὲ γέρας προσέθηκεν ἑκάστῃ.[78]
> (*Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 126-129)

The foreshadowing of the cult at Olympia is made explicit through the location of Hermes' imitation of sacrifice, the river Alpheios mentioned in the *Hymn* both at line 101 and again at line 139. Pindar mentions the Alpheios also in *Olympian 10* when speaking of Heracles, as the founder of the Olympian Games, "honoring the stream of Alpheios along with the twelve ruler gods" (*Olympian* 10.49).[79]

The gods each had their own position within the pantheon, distinct from one another. Walter Burkert describes four sources that contribute to the understanding of any god, "The distinctive personality of a god is constituted and mediated by at least four different factors: the established local cult with its ritual programme and unique

[77] All translations of the *Homeric Hymns* are from West (2003) with adaptations.

[78] All the texts of the *Hymns* contained here come from Allen, Halliday and Sikes (1936).

[79] τιμάσαις πόρον Ἀλφεοῦ μετὰ δώδεκ' ἀνάκτων θεῶν· (*Olympian* 10, 48-49).

atmosphere, the divine name, the myths told about the named being, and the iconography, especially the cult image.[80]

I deal here with the third source: the myths. According to Herodotus, the myths that established the gods' positions relative to each other were those contained in the works of Homer and Hesiod. Herodotus says, "It was Homer and Hesiod who created for the Greeks a genealogy of the gods, gave the gods their epithets, distributed their honors and competences, and stamped them with their form" (*Histories* 2.53).

The *Hymns* served a similar purpose. Jenny Strauss Clay, in her book *The Politics of Olympus: Form and Meaning in the Major* Homeric Hymns, argues that the *Hymns* serve to complete the hierarchy of the Olympian gods. Clay, in the process of her larger argument for the Pan-Hellenic nature of the *Hymns*, focuses on the *timai* accorded to each god and the process by which they acquire it.[81] In this she follows Lutz Lenze who says of the *Hymns*, "At the core of each lies a concern with the acquisition or redistribution of *timai* within the Olympian cosmos."[82] This *timai*, or honor, directly correlates to the gods' attributes. Apollo is honored for being the giver of prophecy, the inventor of music and medicine, a god of archery, etc.

However these myths, especially the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Hymns* contain much more than information about the gods' positions and attributes. They contain stories of the gods interacting with mortals. It is the ways that the gods are portrayed

[80] Burkert (1985) p. 119.

[81] Clay (1989).

[82] Lenze (1975) p. 20.

during and through these interactions with mortals that make the Greek gods fascinating to us thousands of years later.

Within literature, Homer, Hesiod and the *Hymns* provide the earliest and most authoritative account of the gods' hierarchy and their specific functions within that hierarchy. In fact, one could go so far as to say that within literature the arrangement of the gods by their births and their spheres of influence is nearly all we have.

G. Kirk, in his article, "Greek Mythology: Some New Perspectives," discusses the relative poverty of mythological stories about the Greek gods, asking, "What is known from the rest of Homer and from other Greek literature, which constantly alludes to the Olympian deities and their acts? Surprisingly little beyond the birth of each god and the acquisition of his or her special functions. It is the mythical cosmogony and theogony that is the richest part of Greek divine mythology […] and once the Titans are out of the way the mythical process of theogony begins to flag."[83]

Outside of the theogonic works, the Greek gods appear mainly through their interactions with mortals. It is in and through these interactions that the gods take on their personalities. As Kirk says, "What does Hermes do apart from being a miraculous, resourceful and mischievous baby, one who invents the lyre and steals Apollo's cattle (by a common folktale motif) before being made into herald and *psuchopompos*?"[84] The herald and the psuchopompos roles of Hermes are precisely those roles he will assume in his appearances in myth, in his interactions with (or on behalf of) mortals.

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[83] Kirk (1972) p. 78.

[84] Kirk (1972) p. 78.

Hermes' role or function, like those of the other gods, is defined prior to his interaction with mortals, not by it. For the ancient Greeks, it is set out in the hierarchy, by Hesiod, Homer and the *Hymns* and is independent of his interaction with mortals. Each gods' *timai* is predetermined, as in Hesiod's *Theogony*, where Zeus is depicted dispensing them to the gods (890). Thus, Hermes is not a psychopompos or a herald as a result of an interaction with a mortal; instead it is because this role is what is called for that the god involved is Hermes.

B. Division of Attributes

The characterization of the Greek gods, in the cognitive model described in Chapter One, is based on the *template* PERSON. *Inferences* can be drawn about them based on this *template*, as explained above. They are supernatural because of the *violation* - immortality. However, each of the skills or powers of the gods, to which I will refer as "attributes" from now on, is a further *violation* of that *template*. Since understanding between gods and mortals is based on assumptions about the other using the *template* PERSON, any further *violations* of the *template* threaten this understanding, and thus threaten communication.

Envision communication as a two-pointed arrow balanced on a fulcrum, with one end pointing to Humans and the other to Gods. The shaft of the arrow stands in visually for the *template* through which understanding flows from one side (Humans) to the other (Gods) or visa-versa.

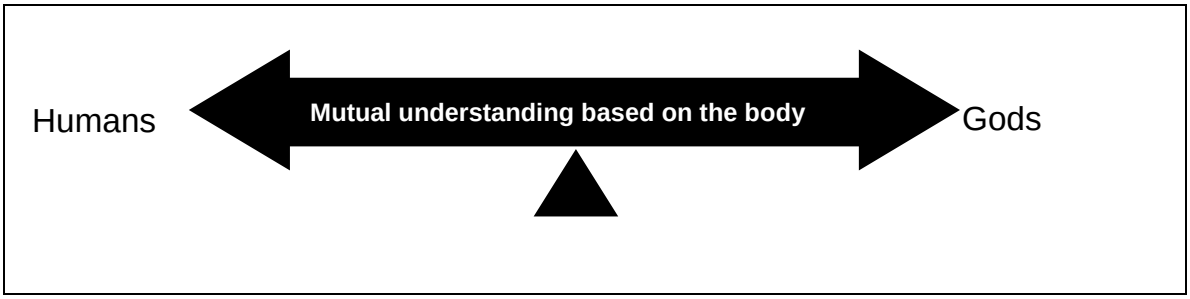

Figure 8. Representation of communication between Humans and Gods.

In this illustration, nothing is upsetting the balance between Humans and Gods. Nothing is stopping communication occurring between Humans and Gods. This illustration might apply to any narrative situation where the god has appeared in the form of a human and is not yet revealed as anything other than human by any physical, physiological, psychological or other trait. Immortality, after all, is not a trait that normally affects the ephemeral interactions between mortals and immortals.[85]

Any *violation* of the *template* in addition to that of immortality tips the balance of communication, both metaphorically and in the illustration.

[85] Battle and warfare might seem like exceptions to this statement. However, it is never the gods' immortality that matters in a battle, but their strength, their skill with weapons or words, the natural phenomena they can bring to bear, etc. Aphrodite's wounding and subsequent retreat from battle in Book 5 of the *Iliad* proves this point. Aphrodite's immortality did not effect the situation to her benefit. She was forced to flee the scene when presented with force, since she did not have the correct attribute to counter it. Immortality could be said to benefit her in that scene only in that she lived and healed to "fight" another day.

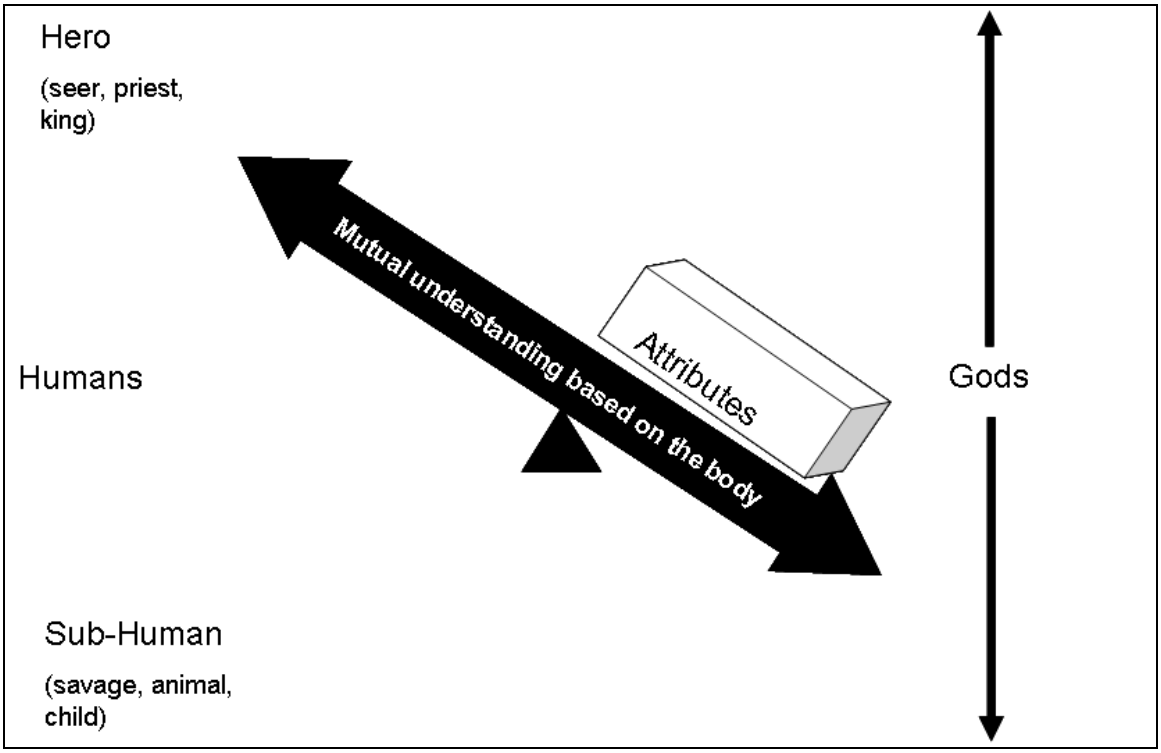

Figure 9. Representation of communication between Humans and Gods when overbalanced by Attributes.

There is no longer a complete correlation between "Humans" and "Gods."[86] The many "attributes" which the Greek gods display, if lumped all together, rather than spread out, would tip the balance of understanding to such an extent that any understanding between gods and mortals would become nearly impossible. Only a privileged human,

[86] The "Human" side of the diagram has been expanded to include various levels of human hierarchy. The "Gods" for this illustration are essentially the same from high to low on the hierarcy. While I believe that it can be useful to think about a hierarchy among the gods, I do not believe that it is effective or necessary for this illustration.

one who falls in my larger category of Hero but also could include seers, priests, or kings, might still have a chance at bridging the gap and communicating with a god who was so demonstrably far from human.

However, when the attributes of the gods are divided up, each attribute has less weight, less impact on the image of the god, and thus causes a smaller *violation* of the *template*. For example if a god in a scene narrated about mortals and immortals were to appear just like any other man but then display extreme strength, this would not create as large of a problem for communication as if that god performed multiple *violations*. "Strength" alone, as illustrated below in Figure 5, would not tip the balance as far.

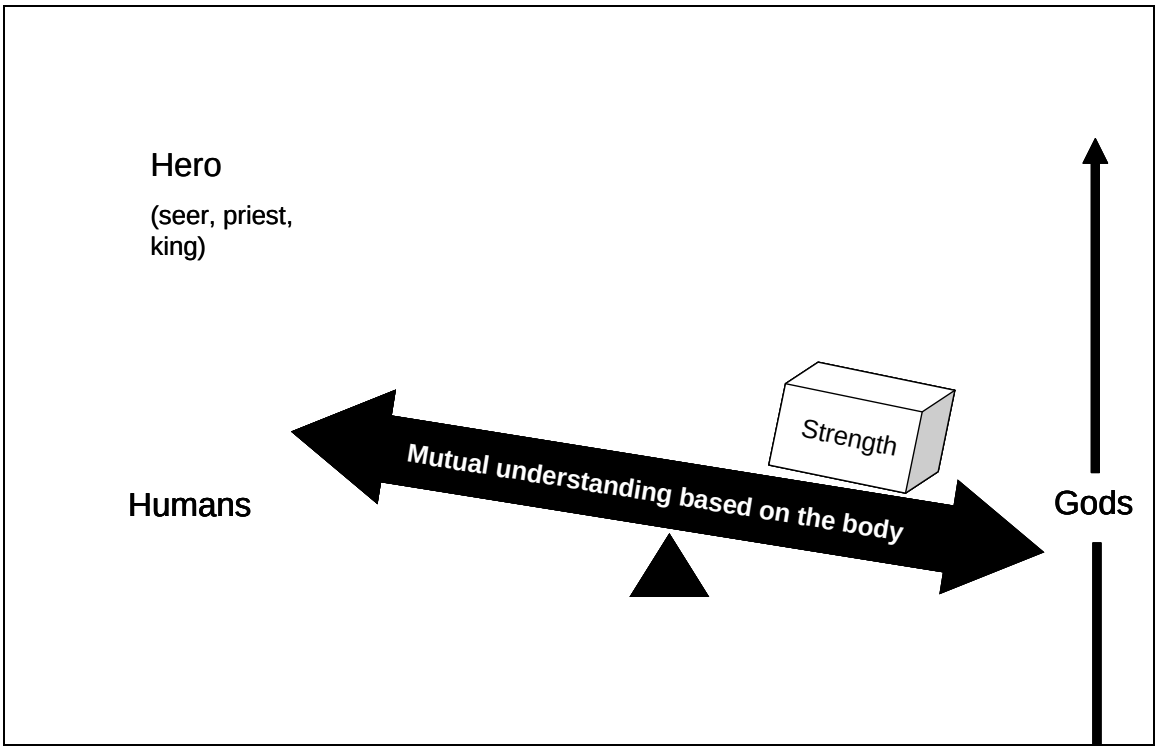


Figure 10. Representation of communication between Humans and Gods when less overbalanced by allocated attributes.

While imbalance between the two sides, Humans and Gods, is lessened by the allocation of skills, it still exists. The path of communication is kept open, the arrow balanced by two techniques within narrative. The first applies only to indirect *violations*.

## III. Indirect *Violations* of the Body

Indirect *violations* of the body are those *violations* of the *template* PERSON and the boundaries that ought to apply to the human body which are accomplished through the use of an object separate from the body, i.e. through tools. It is assumed for this section that the god has appeared (or will appear) to the mortals in a human form and that he or she performs some action that ought to be beyond that form.

By using a tool to perform the action that is beyond a human body's capabilities, the god avoids the secondary *violation* of the *template* PERSON and maintains the common denominator of the body, as the following discussion will demonstrate.

### A. Hermes' Sandals and Other Modes of Transportation

For example, when, in the *Iliad*, Zeus sends Hermes to Calypso's island to command the release of Odysseus, the god uses special sandals to accomplish the journey.

> And immediately he fastened under his feet the supple sandals
> of ever-glowing gold, that wing him over the waves
> and boundless earth with the rush of gusting winds.
> He seized the wand that enchants the eyes of men

whenever Hermes wants, or wakes us up from sleep.
That wand in his grip, the powerful giant-killer,
swooping down from Pieria, down the high clear air,
plunged to the sea and skimmed the waves like a tern
that down the deadly gulfs of the barren salt swells
glides and dives for fish,
dipping its beating wings in bursts of spray –
so Hermes skimmed the crests on endless crests.[87]

αὐτίκ' ἔπειθ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο καλὰ πέδιλα,
ἀμβρόσια χρύσεια, τά μιν φέρον ἠμὲν ἐφ' ὑγρὴν
ἠδ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν ἅμα πνοιῇσ' ἀνέμοιο.
εἵλετο δὲ ῥάβδον, τῇ τ' ἀνδρῶν ὄμματα θέλγει,
ὧν ἐθέλει, τοὺς δ' αὖτε καὶ ὑπνώοντας ἐγείρει·
τὴν μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχων πέτετο κρατὺς Ἀργεϊφόντης.
Πιερίην δ' ἐπιβὰς ἐξ αἰθέρος ἔμπεσε πόντῳ·
σεύατ' ἔπειτ' ἐπὶ κῦμα λάρῳ ὄρνιθι ἐοικώς,
ὅς τε κατὰ δεινοὺς κόλπους ἁλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο
ἰχθῦς ἀγρώσσων πυκινὰ πτερὰ δεύεται ἅλμῃ·
τῷ ἴκελος πολέεσσιν ὀχήσατο κύμασιν Ἑρμῆς.[88]
(*Odyssey* 5.44-54)

While Hermes is traveling, he is envisioned by the narrative as having a body. Because he has a body, he is limited by the ideas of time and distance. He cannot instantly appear at Calypso's island, but must find some way to travel there. This is not to say that the poet made a conscious choice between an instant journey of an "un-embodied" Hermes and the trip by "flying-sandal" narrated above. But because the god is conceptualized as having a body, it is necessary to account for ideas such as time and distance.

[87] Translations of the *Odyssey* are from Fagles (1996) unless otherwise noted.

[88] All the texts from the *Odyssey* contained here come from P. von der Mühll, *Homeri Odyssea* (1962) unless otherwise noted.

According to the implications of this passage, Hermes does not fly because he is a god or because he has a special attribute, but because he has a tool that grants him the ability. The use of this tool in no way affects the status of Hermes' body. It causes no *violations* for the *template*, unlike the example of "strength" from figure 5. This is because as a tool the object can be used equally by either a god or a mortal.

These same sandals are also used by Perseus, a mortal, to achieve flight. Perseus is given the sandals, along with a sickle, bag, and cap by the gods (Athena, Hermes, and Hades) to help him overcome the gorgon, Medusa. The story of Perseus' sandals is recorded as early as Herodotus. In Book Two of the *Histories*, Herodotus reports that the Egyptians have a temple to Perseus and that both Perseus himself and his "sandal" appears to them.

> In this city [Bubastis] is a square temple of Perseus son of Danae, in a grove of palm trees. Before this temple stand great stone columns; and at the entrance, two great stone statues. In the outer court there is a shrine with an image of Perseus standing in it. The people of this Khemmis say that Perseus is seen often up and down this land, and often within the temple, and that the sandal he wears, which is four feet long, keeps turning up, and that when it does turn up, all Egypt prospers. This is what they say; and their doings in honor of Perseus are Greek, inasmuch as they celebrate games that include every form of contest, and offer animals and cloaks and skins as prizes.
>
> ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ πόλι ἔστι Περσέος τοῦ Δανάης ἱρὸν τετράγωνον, πέριξ δὲ αὐτοῦ φοίνικες πεφύκασι· τὰ δὲ πρόπυλα τοῦ ἱροῦ λίθινά ἐστι κάρτα μεγάλα· ἐπὶ δὲ αὐτοῖσι ἀνδριάντες δύο ἑστᾶσι λίθινοι μεγάλοι· ἐν δὲ τῷ περιβεβλημένῳ τούτῳ νηός τε ἔνι καὶ ἄγαλμα ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνέστηκε τοῦ Περσέος. Οὗτοι οἱ Χεμμῖται λέγουσι τὸν Περσέα πολλάκις μὲν ἀνὰ τὴν γῆν φαίνεσθαι σφίσι, πολλάκις δὲ ἔσω τοῦ ἱροῦ, σανδάλιόν τε αὐτοῦ πεφορημένον εὑρίσκεσθαι, ἐὸν τὸ μέγαθος δίπηχυ, τὸ ἐπεὰν φανῇ, εὐθενέειν ἅπασαν Αἴγυπτον. Ταῦτα μὲν λέγουσι, ποιεῦσι δὲ τάδε ἑλληνικὰ τῷ Περσέϊ·[89]

[89] Text from Legrand (1963).

(Her. *Hist*. 2.91.5-15)

There is also pictorial evidence of Perseus receiving the sandals. A black figure hydria from 520 BC depicts Perseus receiving the sandals, along with the cap and bag, from the sea nymphs.[90] Athena looks on from behind. Also, on a hydria from 450 BC, Perseus stands beside Hermes.[91] Perseus has the cap, harp, and sandals, but more importantly, Hermes is not also wearing winged sandals. This image implies that there is one special pair of winged shoes and that while Perseus has them, Hermes must do without.

In a scene in Book 1 of the *Odyssey*, Athena also is described as using flying sandals.

> So Athena vowed
> and under her feet she fastened the supple sandals,
> ever-glowing gold, that wing her over the waves
> and boundless earth with the rush of gusting winds.
> She seized the rugged spear tipped with a bronze point-
> weighted, heavy, the massive shaft she wields to break the lines
> of heroes the mighty Father's daughter storms against.
>
> ὣς εἰποῦσ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο καλὰ πέδιλα,
> ἀμβρόσια χρύσεια, τά μιν φέρον ἠμὲν ἐφ' ὑγρὴν
> ἠδ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν ἅμα πνοιῇσ' ἀνέμοιο.
> ἠδ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν ἅμα πνοιῇσ' ἀνέμοιο.
> εἵλετο δ' ἄλκιμον ἔγχος, ἀκαχμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
> βριθὺ μέγα στιβαρόν, τῷ δάμνησι στίχας ἀνδρῶν
> ἡρώων, τοῖσίν τε κοτέσσεται ὀβριμοπάτρη,
>
> (*Odyssey*, 1.96-101)

[90] Black figure hydria from Cerveteri LIMC 7, Plate 287, London, British Museum B 155. Phot. Mus. XIX-C41.

[91] Black figure hydria LIMC 7, Plate 287, Edinburg, National Museum of Scotland, 1872.23.II. Phot. Mus. CVA Roll 43 Shot 8.

This scene is an almost exact replica of that of Hermes from above.[92] Athena here has just told Zeus that he ought to send Hermes to Calypso's island. Her method of leaving Mount Olympus to travel to Ithaca mirrors the method Hermes will use several chapters later to travel to Calypso. Generally in myth Athena is not described as using the flying-sandals.

In the five major *Homeric Hymns* Demeter, Apollo, Dionysus, Aphrodite and Hermes all travel. Each either uses "mortal" methods for their major travel or creates a lie about their method of arrival for the benefit of the mortals they encounter. I will go through each *Hymn* below and, following the order of events as presented in the text, list the instances of the god or goddess' travel. Where appropriate, I will analyze the travel in more depth. The point of the use of tools is, as discussed above, to avoid the second *violation* of the *template* PERSON. Thus, I will focus on instances of travel which concern mortals or that enter/leave the mortal sphere.

i. Demeter

Demeter's departure from Mount Olympus and her subsequent arrival among mortals is not described. She appears in the text to be already on earth when she hears the distressed call of Persephone and begins to search for her. Demeter is said to "roam the earth with burning torches in her hands, and in her grief she did not once taste ambrosia and the nectar sweet to drink, nor did she splash her body with washing water"

[92] Also of Hermes at *Iliad* 24.340-348.

(47-50). Demeter merely remains apart from the other gods, rather than directly leaving them. The description of her here is overtly concerned with her "body" as it will be perceived by the mortals in the land she is wandering. She is fasting and not bathing, just as a mortal in mourning.

When Demeter describes how she arrived at Eleusis where she met mortals (Keleos' daughters) she creates a fictional story about an escape from a pirate ship (119-133). This story, along with Aphrodite's, is discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

When Demeter leaves Eleusis she has already announced herself as a goddess and made a full epiphany, as discussed in Chapter Three. Demeter's form changes from an old lady to a beautiful goddess "and the sturdy house was filled with a brilliance as of lightning as she went out through the hall" (275-280). Her method of departure is not fully indicated, but there is no need at this point for a tool or a story to account for her presence or absence.

ii. Apollo

Leto generically travels (ἵκετο Λητώ) to find a place to give birth to Apollo. She more specifically "walks on Delos" or even "sets foot on Delos" (ἐπὶ Δήλου ἐβήσετο), marking her physical presence, which is appropriate in light of the labor (birth) she is about to perform.

Iris, on the other hand, travels at the behest of "the goddesses" to Mount Olympus in a completely divine manner. The description of Iris' movement from one location to another is markedly different from that of Hermes, the other messenger god.

But wind-footed swift Iris heard and sped forth

and swiftly she devoured the space between.

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ τό γ' ἄκουσε ποδήνεμος ὠκέα Ἶρις
βῆ ῥα θέειν, ταχέως δὲ διήνυσε πᾶν τὸ μεσηγύ.
(*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 107-108)

Because Iris is moving between two different divine locations, her travel does not need to account for a "body's" movement through time/space in mortal terms. Hermes' travel to Calypso's island was a move into a realm that contained mortals, and thus contained the limitations of the body. Athena likewise was travelling into a mortal realm, Ithaca.

The composer of the Homeric Hymn to Apollo describes the many places Apollo travelled, stood, visited, etc. before he arrived at Telphousa, the first and failed location of his oracle. 29 lines are dedicated to this description (216-245) but his method of travel is not stressed.

Apollo's arrival at Delphi is two-fold and deserves careful examination. He first journeys to the Delphi after having gone out to sea and leapt onto the deck of the Cretan merchants' hollow ship in the form of a dolphin (399-439). Upon arrival, Apollo "darted off the ship, looking like a star in broad daylight, with countless sparks flying off him, and the brilliance was heaven-high" (440-442). Second, Apollo reappears to the sailors walking down to the shore in the form of a young man to greet the "strangers."

As a dolphin, Apollo is clearly divine. He is described as "a portent great and terrible" (401). His arrival on board the ship, his subsequent hijacking of the ship, and his departure in the manner of a star, are all irregular in the extreme. Neither his form nor his actions are reconcilable to any idea of PERSON. However, this is the point of this

moment in the text. The god is not supposed to be understandable and communication is clearly not the intention. This description is meant to be wondrous and maybe a little terrifying. It is a moment where the god's absolute power and the mortals' inability to do anything (even complain) about the situation, is made clear. Apollo in a human body giving commands to the ship would have an entirely different effect. Apollo's choice of a dolphin form and his display of power in controlling the ship are discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

After the ship has arrived at Delphi and Apollo has approached it in the guise of a young man, communication is expected to be successful. Apollo arrives and embodies the epitome of what a youth should be. The communication which follows between Apollo, in his human form, and the sailors, is successful up to a point. Apollo questions the new arrivals, pretending ignorance of their origins and reason for appearing in Delphi (452-461). They in turn comment on his looks and stature, comparing him to the immortals, and ask him to tell them where they are, claiming that "some god" has led them there (462-473). Apollo, finally, reveals himself as a god and commands them to disembark, eat, and proceed to the temple (475-501). It is only later, once actual physical needs of the body enter the conversation, when the sailors ask about food and survival, that communication and understanding break down. This scene is discussed in depth in Chapter Four.

iii. Hermes

Travel in the *Hymn to Hermes* is doubly complicated since the anthropomorphic form of Hermes as presented in the *Hymn* is that of a baby, seemingly unable to walk or travel by normal human means. The issue of how Hermes can walk despite this seeming handicap is not addressed in the *Hymn* except as an alibi presented to Apollo in later scenes.

Hermes, immediately upon being born, does not lie in the cradle but jumps up and goes looking for Apollo's cattle. Despite the limitations of his form, Hermes' travel is imagined as being more human than that of the travel of either Demeter or Apollo, as described above. Hermes walks on the ground and this necessitates his invention of sandals, as a trick to confuse the tracks he leaves as he steals the cattle of Apollo (79-86).

Hermes relies on this trick in his defense to Apollo, claiming "my feet are tender, and it's rough ground beneath" (273). Hermes relies on the idea of his body's limitations in his argument with Apollo as is discussed in detail in Chapter Four. As I will lay out in detail there, Apollo, while not fooled, does play along with the implied limitations of Hermes' body and, as a result, Hermes' final method of travel in the *Hymn* is appropriate to his baby's form – he is carried by Apollo (293).

iv. Aphrodite

In the *Hymn to Aphrodite*, Aphrodite explains her presence to Anchises by saying that Hermes snatched her from a festival and brought her from Phrygia to Troy.

> But now the gold-wand Argus-slayer has snatched me up

from the dance of golden-shafted Artemis who delights in the call of the hunt.
There were many of us, brides and marriageable girls,
dancing, and a vast crowd ringed us about:
from there the god-wand Argus-slayer snatched me,
and brought me over much farmland of mortal men,
and much ownerless and uncultivated land where
ravening beasts roam about their shadowy haunts;
I felt that my feet were not touching the grain-growing earth.

νῦν δέ μ′ ἀνήρπαξε χρυσόρραπις Ἀργειφόντης
ἐκ χοροῦ Ἀρτέμιδος χρυσηλακάτου κελαδεινῆς.
πολλαὶ δὲ νύμφαι καὶ παρθένοι ἀλφεσίβοιαι
παίζομεν, ἀμφὶ δ′ ὅμιλος ἀπείριτος ἐστεφάνωτο·
ἔνθεν μ′ ἥρπαξε χρυσόρραπις Ἀργειφόντης,
πολλὰ δ′ ἔπ′ ἤγαγεν ἔργα καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων,
πολλὴν δ′ ἄκληρόν τε καὶ ἄκτιτον, ἣν διὰ θῆρες
ὠμοφάγοι φοιτῶσι κατὰ σκιόεντας ἐναύλους,
οὐδὲ ποσὶ ψαύσειν ἐδόκουν φυσιζόου αἴης·
(*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 117-125)

Aphrodite's explanation, like Demeter's, accounts for her sudden arrival at the location, in terms that maintain her bodily limits. While Demeter attributes her arrival to mortal interference (pirates), Aphrodite attributes it to the god Hermes.

Aphrodite's explanation is necessary, as Anchises believes her to be a goddess upon first seeing her. He offers to build her an altar and bring her sacrifices (100-102), but he is not overcome with lust nor is he attempting to sleep with her. In order to achieve the outcome that she desires, Aphrodite must weave a tale about who she is. And who she is needs to be a mortal, as Anchises is clearly too wise or too pious to make the mistake of sleeping with the goddess.

If you are a mortal, and the mother who bore you was a woman,
and your father is the famed Otreus, as you say,
and you have come here by the will of the immortal go-between
Hermes, and you are to be known as my wife for ever,
then no god or mortal man
is going to hold me back from making love to you
right now,

Εἰ μὲν θνητή τ' ἐσσί, γυνὴ δέ σε γείνατο μήτηρ,
Ὀτρεὺς δ' ἐστὶ πατὴρ ὄνομα κλυτός, ὡς ἀγορεύεις,
ἀθανάτου δὲ ἔκητι διακτόρου ἐνθάδ' ἱκάνεις
Ἑρμέω, ἐμὴ δ' ἄλοχος κεκλήσεαι ἤματα πάντα·
οὔ τις ἔπειτα θεῶν οὔτε θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων
ἐνθάδε με σχήσει πρὶν σῇ φιλότητι μιγῆναι
αὐτίκα νῦν·

(*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 145-151)

Anchises' acceptance of Aphrodite as a mortal, and thus as a lover, clearly hinges on the truth of her statements about her background and her arrival. Without a proper explanation for her sudden appearance in Troy, Aphrodite would be unable to maintain the illusion that she is in fact not a goddess.

v. Dionysus

The plot of the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* is itself a journey. The pirates abduct Dionysus whom they have mistaken for a human and then witness a series of portents culminating in the epiphany of the god. Dionysus himself does not effect any travel in the *Hymn*.

C. Aphrodite's Tools

Aphrodite, in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, augments her beauty and sex appeal through material objects. Aphrodite's use of clothing and ornaments to incite lust is parallel to Hermes' use of sandals for flight. Although, as the text makes clear in line 143, Aphrodite can merely "cast sweet longing into his [Anchises] heart," she nevertheless begins her conquest by augmenting her appearance with clothes and

ornaments. It is the body that she has assumed in order to appear as a mortal that she adorns, not her true form.

> Going to Cyprus, to Paphos, she disappeared into her fragrant temple;
> it is there that she has her precinct and scented altar.
> There she went in, and closed the gleaming doors,
> and there the Graces bathed her and rubbed her with olive oil,
> divine oil, such as is on the eternal gods,
> ambrosial bridal oil that she had ready perfumed.
> Her body well clad in all her fine garments,
> adorned with gold, smile-loving Aphrodite
> left fragrant Cyprus and sped towards Troy,
> rapidly making her way high among the clouds.
>
> ἐς Κύπρον δ′ ἐλθοῦσα θυώδεα νηὸν ἔδυνεν
> ἐς Πάφον· ἔνθα δέ οἱ τέμενος βωμός τε θυώδης·
> ἔνθ′ ἥ γ′ εἰσελθοῦσα θύρας ἐπέθηκε φαεινάς.
> ἔνθα δέ μιν Χάριτες λοῦσαν καὶ χρῖσαν ἐλαίῳ
> ἀμβρότῳ, οἷα θεοὺς ἐπενήνοθεν αἰὲν ἐόντας,
> ἀμβροσίῳ ἑδανῷ, τό ῥά οἱ τεθυωμένον ἦεν.
> ἑσσαμένη δ′ εὖ πάντα περὶ χροῒ εἵματα καλὰ
> χρυσῷ κοσμηθεῖσα φιλομμειδὴς Ἀφροδίτη
> σεύατ′ ἐπὶ Τροίης προλιποῦσ′ εὐώδεα Κύπρον
> ὕψι μετὰ νέφεσιν ῥίμφα πρήσσουσα κέλευθον.
>
> (*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 58-67)

Aphrodite is bathed, rubbed with olive oil, clad, and adorned with gold. Each of these things are done to the body she assumed, the form in which she will appear to Anchises, the form that looks like a Phrygian maiden. However, Aphrodite is not entirely successful. Anchises, upon seeing her, immediately assumes she is a goddess. However, it is not Aphrodite herself upon whom Anchises gazes, but all the objects (tools) with which she has adorned herself.

> Anchises gazed and took stock of her, wondering at
> her appearance, her stature, and her shining garments;
> for she wore a dress brighter than firelight,

and she had twisted bracelets and shining ear buds.
Round her tender neck there were beautiful necklaces of gold,
most elaborate, and about her tender breasts it shone
like the moon, a wonder to behold.

Ἀγχίσης δ' ὁρόων ἐφράζετο θαύμαινέν τε
εἶδός τε μέγεθος καὶ εἵματα σιγαλόεντα.
πέπλον μὲν γὰρ ἕεστο φαεινότερον πυρὸς αὐγῆς,
εἶχε δ' ἐπιγναμπτὰς ἕλικας κάλυκάς τε φαεινάς,
ὅρμοι δ' ἀμφ' ἁπαλῇ δειρῇ περικαλλέες ἦσαν
καλοὶ χρύσειοι παμποίκιλοι· ὡς δὲ σελήνη
στήθεσιν ἀμφ' ἁπαλοῖσιν ἐλάμπετο, θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι.
(*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 84-90)

It is normal, within epic, for a woman to begin a seduction and announce her desire through her adornments rather than through speech or direct actions. Hera augments her appeal by using Aphrodite's girdle (Iliad 14. 188 ff.) and Penelope dresses up to appear before the suitors in order to elicit gifts (Odyssey 18.190 ff.).[93] Although not technically a seduction scene, Pandora is carefully dressed and adorned in both the Works and Days and the Theogony. Women's use of adornment as a form of seduction, in epic, is usually explained by reference to the restrictions placed on women's sexual life in Greece. As Smith says, " Given the generally strict confinement of women's sexual life in Greece, it was inevitable that a woman's announcement of her own desire could figure in myth only as a part of the Potiphar's Wife theme, as it did in the stories of Phaidra, Sthenoboia, Akastos' wife, and others.[94] Thus, the active pursuit of a man by a woman is unacceptable. However, a woman may appear specially bathed and adorned in order to

[93] However, note that Penelope wanted to appear without adornment or special preparation and Athena would not allow it.

[94] See Smith (1981) p. 112.

incite the man to passion without the negative connotations of the (often adulterous) seductress. While this explanation makes sense for mortals such as Penelope, it is less convincing for goddesses such as Hera and Aphrodite who are not held to the same standards.

Indeed, Hera's situation in Iliad 14 makes the difference clear, as simple bathing and adornment is not sufficient. Instead she needs to borrow, from Aphrodite, a tool to grant her the power of seduction. Much as Hermes stops to strap on his sandals when he must make a journey, Hera contrives to get and put on the girdle of Aphrodite when she must seduce Zeus.

> She spoke, and untied from her bosom the embroidered strap,
> in which are fashioned all manner of allurements;
> in it is love, in it desire, in it dalliance -
> persuasion that steals the senses even of the wise.
> This she placed in her hands, and spoke and addressed her:
> "Take now and place in your bosom this strap, inlaid,
> in which all things are fashioned; I say you will not
> return with that unaccomplished, whatever in your heart you desire."
>
> Ἦ, καὶ ἀπὸ στήθεσφιν ἐλύσατο κεστὸν ἱμάντα
> ποικίλον, ἔνθα δέ οἱ θελκτήρια πάντα τέτυκτο·
> ἔνθ' ἔνι μὲν φιλότης, ἐν δ' ἵμερος, ἐν δ' ὀαριστὺς
> πάρφασις, ἥ τ' ἔκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων.
> τόν ῥά οἱ ἔμβαλε χερσὶν ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζε·
> τῇ νῦν τοῦτον ἱμάντα τεῷ ἐγκάτθεο κόλπῳ
> ποικίλον, ᾧ ἔνι πάντα τετεύχαται· οὐδέ σέ φημι
> ἄπρηκτόν γε νέεσθαι, ὅ τι φρεσὶ σῇσι μενοινᾷς.
>
> (*Iliad* 14.214-221)

Hera is guaranteed success by wearing the girdle and in fact, does succeed, which leads to the obvious question: where is the girdle in the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite? Aphrodite has the power to cast longing into Anchises' heart and she has the definitive tool for seduction, but the first is delayed and the second is entirely absent from the

narrative. Instead, Aphrodite mirrors a mortal woman's means to seduction. Aphrodite's adornment is in fact not a way to augment her beauty, but to disguise it and make her seem less than she is, to seem to be only a mortal.

Aphrodite's actual epiphany does not rely on her wondrous garments or jewelry at all, but upon the characteristic elements of light and increased height.[95]

> At the hour when herdsmen turn their cattle
> and fat sheep back to the steading from the flowery pastures,
> then she poured a sweet, peaceful sleep upon Anchises,
> while she dressed herself in her fine garments.
> Her body well clad in them all, the noble goddess
> stood in the hut–her head reached to the sturdy rafter,
> while from her cheeks shone a divine beauty,
> such as belongs to fair-garlanded Cytherea
>
> Ἧμος δ᾽ ἂψ εἰς αὖλιν ἀποκλίνουσι νομῆες
> βοῦς τε καὶ ἴφια μῆλα νομῶν ἐξ ἀνθεμοέντων,
> τῆμος ἄρ᾽ Ἀγχίσῃ μὲν ἐπὶ γλυκὺν ὕπνον ἔχευε
> νήδυμον, αὐτὴ δὲ χροΐ ἕννυτο εἵματα καλά.
> ἑσσαμένη δ᾽ εὖ πάντα περὶ χροΐ δῖα θεάων
> ἔστη ἄρα κλισίῃ, εὐποιήτοιο μελάθρου
> κῦρε κάρη, κάλλος δὲ παρειάων ἀπέλαμπεν
> ἄμβροτον, οἷόν τ᾽ ἐστὶν ἐϋστεφάνου Κυθερείης.
> (*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 168-175)

These "normal" elements of epiphany are each clear violations of the body. A mortal's cheeks do not shine and their heads don't reach to the rafters. At this point, as is discussed in Chapter Three, the god is revealed as a god, by stock violations of the body.

[95] Epiphanies are discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

D. Hermes: Exploiting Tools

The *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* reverses the model described so far in this chapter. Hermes, instead of using tools to mask his divinity in encounters with mortals, uses tools to elevate himself to a position among the Olympians.[96] It is Hermes' ability to create and manipulate tools that creates a recognition of his divinity.

Hermes explicitly states his intention to earn a place of honor among the gods to his mother after he returns from his cattle raid.

> I am going to embark on the finest of arts,
> Providing for the two of us forever. We won't
> put up with staying here and being without offerings or prayers
> alone of all the immortals, as you would have us do.
> It's better to spend every day chatting among the gods,
> with wealth and riches and substance,
> than to sit at home in a gloomy cave.
>
> αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τέχνης ἐπιβήσομαι ἥ τις ἀρίστη
> βουκολέων ἐμὲ καὶ σὲ διαμπερές· οὐδὲ θεοῖσι
> νῶϊ μετ' ἀθανάτοισιν ἀδώρητοι καὶ ἄλιστοι
> αὐτοῦ τῇδε μένοντες ἀνεξόμεθ', ὡς σὺ κελεύεις.
> βέλτερον ἤματα πάντα μετ' ἀθανάτοις ὀαρίζειν
> πλούσιον ἀφνειὸν πολυλήϊον ἢ κατὰ δῶμα
> ἄντρῳ ἐν ἠερόεντι θαασσέμεν·
>
> (*Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 166-172)

With this passage in mind, it becomes clear that the theft of Apollo's cattle was done to attract his notice and ultimately to create the situation found at the end of the

[96] I am indebted for parts of this argument to a paper delivered at the 2006 meeting of CAMWS by Christopher Bungard, "Looking Toward the Future: The Work of *noos* in the *Hymn **to** Hermes*" (2006). Bungard argued for the importance of Hermes' *noos* in allowing him to see the potential in items to become other than they are. While Bungard's paper was about the actual source of Hermes' divine talent, I want to focus on the recognition of Hermes from his manipulation of his inventions.

*Hymn*, the debate in front of Zeus. As for the lyre, it is invented before this episode, so as to be available as a bargaining tool for resolution. But what of Hermes' other creation, the sandals?

> At the sands of the coast he at once used wicker to plait sandals
> beyond description or imagination, wondrous work,
> combining tamarisk and myrtle twigs.
> Tying together an armful of their fresh growth,
> he bound the light sandals securely on his feet,
> foliage and all, which the glorious Argus-slayer
> had plucked from Pieria as he prepared his journeying,
> improvising as one does when hastening on a long journey.
>
> σάνδαλα δ' αὐτίκα ῥιψὶν ἐπὶ ψαμάθοις ἁλίῃσιν
> ἄφραστ' ἠδ' ἀνόητα διέπλεκε, θαυματὰ ἔργα,
> συμμίσγων μυρίκας καὶ μυρσινοειδέας ὄζους.
> τῶν τότε συνδήσας νεοθηλέαν ἀγκάλῳ ὥρην
> ἀβλαβέως ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο σάνδαλα κοῦφα
> αὐτοῖσιν πετάλοισι, τὰ κύδιμος Ἀργειφόντης
> ἔσπασε Πιερίηθεν ὁδοιπορίην ἀλεείνων,
> οἷά τ' ἐπειγόμενος δολιχὴν ὁδόν, αὐτοτροπήσας.
> (*Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 79-86)

The use of sandals to mask his foot prints is one of the key factors for creating the confusion that leads to Apollo needing Zeus to settle the conflict. Because of Hermes' deceptions during the actual theft (the use of sandals to mask his prints and the cattle walking backwards), Apollo has no clear knowledge of his role or guilt. The text reflects this during Apollo's search. Apollo does not know who stole his cattle until he observes a "spread-winged bird" (τανυσίπτερον). This knowledge that Apollo suddenly acquires is uniquely appropriate for him, as a god of prophecy. The bird's appearance at a certain point in the sky resembles augury. However, this knowledge is not the type of

knowledge needed to accuse or properly convict Hermes of the deed, only to lead Apollo to him.

The resulting confusion between Hermes and Apollo, based upon Hermes' appearance and references to his body is one of the major topics of Chapter Four. Hermes, as I will demonstrate, creates confusion between himself and Apollo, by exploiting the communication problems described above and again in Chapter Three as the problem relates to humans and gods. However, as the encounter is between two gods, Apollo and Hermes, the communication break-down is unnecessary, occurring only because Hermes exploits the characterizations of the body that impede communication between humans and gods. This episode serves to illuminate and explore the problems in communication between beings as unlike as gods and humans when that communication is based upon a shared understanding (*templates*) that is false.

Hermes' use of tools, especially his deception with the sandals, is one more example of how Hermes assumes the role of the human within the communication model.

## Conclusion

In summary, the gods, when they are appearing to humans, must avoid secondary *violations* of the *template* PERSON of which they are perceived to be a part. For so long as a secondary *violation* is avoided, the god is perceived as being human or at least human-like and is able to communicate with the real humans in the narrative. As soon as a secondary *violation* is introduced, however, the communication fails and the god is/must be recognized. Two strategies for avoiding this are the allocation of skills among

many gods and the use of tools by gods to distance the *violation* from their perceived body. The next chapter will examine what happens when the *violation* is direct, or not distanced by the use of a tool.

# CHAPTER 3

# UNMASKING THE DIVINE

## I. Direct Violations of the Body in the *Homeric Hymns*

Chapter Two discussed the allocations of skills among many gods and the indirect *violations* of the *template* PERSON. Each of these are techniques used to keep the representation of the god or goddess, within the narrative, as similar to an actual mortal as possible. While the god or goddess remains recognizable to the mortals as like the *template* PERSON, communication within the narrative is based upon the assumptions gained from the use of the template PERSON. Moreover, most of the communication issues within the texts relate to the assumed physical bodies of the humans or gods. Mortals (and gods) within the narrative make certain assumptions about the other, based on their assumed shared likeness, and base their understanding of the other on these assumptions. However, as the "bodies" the gods occupy when interacting with mortals are *always* false, this understanding, and the communication based upon it, is unsuccessful. The *Homeric Hymns* represent this type of communication as failing.

However, another form of communication is represented with the *Hymns*. Communication based on ritual, which is the focus of Chapter Four, succeeds. As a necessary step to this from of communication, the god or goddess must be recognized as

such by the mortals within the narrative. This recognition follows a set pattern. It is not based upon physical signs or markers, but upon self identification by the god or goddess.

The first section of this Chapter will discuss the direct *violations* of the gods' assumed bodies, and how these *violations*, within the cognitive model outlined here, ought to lead to recognition. Direct *violations* are *violations* that a human could not perform and which are not transferred away from the body of the god by the use of an outside object, such as a tool. There are few instances of direct *violations* in the *Homeric Hymns*. The *template* PERSON cannot be maintained, by any means, once the god has directly *violated* the perceived limits of his or her body. However, this does not lead directly to recognition of the god or goddess for the mortals, as examples of "near recognition" from the *Hymn to Aphrodite* and the *Hymn to Demeter* will show.

The second section of this Chapter will discuss how recognition is achieved not through physical markers but, instead, through vocal self identification. The intended result of this recognition is the issuing of commands. These commands fall within the category of ritual (i.e. successful) communication, which is discussed further in Chapter Four.

A. Bonds that Will Not Hold

The *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus*, although the shortest of the poems analyzed here, provides the best example of direct *violation* in the *Hymns*. Dionysus is seen "on the shore of the barren sea, in a likeness of a youth in first manhood" (νεηνίῃ ἀνδρὶ ἐοικὼς πρωθήβῃ). Pirates mistake the god, based on his *appearance*, for a noble and,

thus, wealthy human. The pirates, due to this mistaken perception of the god, seize him and take him onto their ship in order to ransom him. It is not until they attempt to bind Dionysus that he does anything that challenges their perception of him as a human.

> And they meant to bind him in grievous bonds;
> but the bonds would not contain him, the plaited bindings fell clear away from
> his hands and feet, while he sat there smiling
> with his dark eyes.
>
> καὶ δεσμοῖς ἔθελον δεῖν ἀργαλέοισι.
> τὸν δ' οὐκ ἴσχανε δεσμά, λύγοι δ' ἀπὸ τηλόσ' ἔπιπτον
> χειρῶν ἠδὲ ποδῶν· ὁ δὲ μειδιάων ἐκάθητο
> ὄμμασι κυανέοισι
>
> (*Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* 12-15)

Dionysus's ability to free himself from the bonds, to repel the very possibility of binding, is an act that would be impossible for any human. Much as the bonds cannot contain Dionysus's assumed human form, his human form can no longer contain or hide his true nature, as a god. The *violation* of the expected limits of the human body reveals Dionysus as a god, at least to one of the human observers. The helmsman, upon seeing Dionysus's supernatural act, recognizes him as a god and informs his comrades.

> "Madmen, which of the gods is this that you would bind prisoner?
> – a mighty one, our sturdy ship cannot support him.
> This is either Zeus, or silverbow Apollo,
> or Poseidon; he is not like mortal men,
> but the gods who dwell on Olympus.
> Come on, let's put him ashore straight away on the dark land.
> Don't lay hands on him, or he may be angered
> and raise fierce winds and tempest!"
>
> Δαιμόνιοι τίνα τόνδε θεὸν δεσμεύεθ' ἑλόντες
> καρτερόν; οὐδὲ φέρειν δύναταί μιν νηῦς εὐεργής.
> ἢ γὰρ Ζεὺς ὅδε γ' ἐστὶν ἢ ἀργυρότοξος Ἀπόλλων
> ἠὲ Ποσειδάων· ἐπεὶ οὐ θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσιν
> εἴκελος, ἀλλὰ θεοῖς οἳ Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσιν.
> ἀλλ' ἄγετ' αὐτὸν ἀφῶμεν ἐπ' ἠπείροιο μελαίνης

αὐτίκα, μηδ' ἐπὶ χεῖρας ἰάλλετε μή τι χολωθεὶς
ὄρσῃ ἀργαλέους τ' ἀνέμους καὶ λαίλαπα πολλήν.
(*Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* 17-24)

Communication, the main point of the god assuming a likeness to which humans can relate and understand, has not even been attempted by this point in the narrative. Dionysus has only appeared, allowed himself to be seized, and smiled enigmatically. However, a major point of the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* is in the contrast drawn between the helmsman, who can recognize a god by the display of supernatural powers, and his comrades, who persist in believing their original perception of Dionysus as a human. The problem of humans recognizing and acknowledging Dionysus as a god is standard theme for the god, as seen in Euripides' *Bacchae*. When Dionysus is recognized and accepted as a god, the humans are blessed (*eudaimonia*) and when he is not they suffer consequences such as madness.[97] The conclusion of the *Hymn* (the death of the captain, the punishment/transformation of the other sailors, and the blessing for the helmsman) leaves no doubt of which human the audience is supposed to approve and with whom they ought to sympathize.

However, another form of communication does occur, to drive home the fact that the humans ought to recognize the god by his supernatural displays. When their inability to bind him is not sufficient sign of his godhood, Dionysus provides further supernatural displays, each greater and more obvious than the last, until finally each human on the ship has realized that he is a god.

[97] See Burnett, (1970, esp. p. 26), for a discussion of the rewards and punishments associated with recognizing Dionysus and other gods.

Helene Foley discusses a similar phenomenon in Euripides' *Bacchae*. Foley contrasts Dionysus' revelation of himself in speech as opposed to through actions, saying, "Compare, for example, the effect on Pentheus of Tiresias' speech about the god with Tiresias' and Cadmus' gesture of dressing and dancing as his followers. The physical transformation communicates to the king as the rationalizing speech does not. Sound, gesture and symbol express the god even more effectively than language. Pentheus, the ruler of Thebes, is destroyed through his inability to understand truth in the symbolic form that Dionysiac religion and theater offer to the adherent or spectator."[98]

In the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* there is a similar emphasis on revelation through signs other than speech.

> But suddenly they began to see miraculous apparitions.
> First of all, wine gushed out over the dark swift ship,
> sweet-tasting and fragrant, and there rose an ambrosial smell,
> and the sailors were all seized with astonishment as they perceived it.
> Then along the top of the sail there spread a vine
> in both directions, hung with many grape clusters.
> About the mast dark ivy was winding,
> all flowering, and pretty berries were out on it;
> and all the tholes were decorated with garlands. When they saw this,
> then they did start calling on the helmsman to take the ship
> to land. But the god became a lion in the ship,
> a terrible lion in the bows, and he roared loudly;
> and amidships he made a shaggy-maned bear, showing forth his signs.

> τάχα δέ σφιν ἐφαίνετο θαυματὰ ἔργα.
> οἶνος μὲν πρώτιστα θοὴν ἀνὰ νῆα μέλαιναν
> ἡδύποτος κελάρυζ' εὐώδης, ὤρνυτο δ' ὀδμὴ
> ἀμβροσίη· ναύτας δὲ τάφος λάβε πάντας ἰδόντας.
> αὐτίκα δ' ἀκρότατον παρὰ ἱστίον ἐξετανύσθη
> ἄμπελος ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα, κατεκρημνῶντο δὲ πολλοὶ
> βότρυες· ἀμφ' ἱστὸν δὲ μέλας εἱλίσσετο κισσὸς

[98] Foley (1980) p. 108. See Bierl (1991) pp. 186-218.

ἄνθεσι τηλεθάων, χαρίεις δ᾽ ἐπὶ καρπὸς ὀρώρει·
πάντες δὲ σκαλμοὶ στεφάνους ἔχον· οἱ δὲ ἰδόντες
νῆ᾽ ἤδη τότ᾽ ἔπειτα κυβερνήτην ἐκέλευον
γῇ πελάαν· ὁ δ᾽ ἄρα σφι λέων γένετ᾽ ἔνδοθι νηὸς
δεινὸς ἐπ᾽ ἀκροτάτης, μέγα δ᾽ ἔβραχεν, ἐν δ᾽ ἄρα μέσσῃ
ἄρκτον ἐποίησεν λασιαύχενα σήματα φαίνων·
(*Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* 34-46)

The poem states directly that Dionysus is "showing forth his signs" (σήματα φαίνων) when he makes these portents appear. He begins with miraculous but harmless signs - wine, an ambrosial smell, grape vines and ivy. These are sufficient for the rest of the crew to recognize the god, and they wish to return the god to land at this point.[99] However, the text does not allow any possibility for appeasing the god here. He moves directly to more violent and terrible signs, changing himself into a lion and causing a bear to appear.

Sparshott sees lines 44-48 as an interpolation. Among his reasons is the contrast between the phenomena being miraculous apparitions or signs of Dionysus' power (θαυματὰ ἔργα v. σήματα φαίνων).[100] According to Sparshott, Dionysus in this scene is

[99] Burnett (1970) claims that Dionysus give a Pentheus a chance (until line 810 of the tragedy) to recognize his divinity and that this is unique in tragedies of divine vengeance. For a more extensive treatment of Dionysiac myths, see Massenzio (1969). Massenzio analyses many examples from myth of both positive and negative reception of Dionysus (Ikarios, Oineus, Ankaios, Oinopion, Orestheus, and Staphylos, Lycurgus, Pentheus, Minyades and Protides). Massenzio focuses on Dionysus as a foreign god who introduces viticulture to his hosts. However, as Massenzio's analysis shows, even immediate acceptance of Dionysus usually leads to the sacrifice of the host.

[100] Among Sparshott's other arguments regarding the lines being an interpolation is the idea that Dionysus is not otherwise associated with bears, but is associated with "such lithe beasts as stags, tigers, panthers,

not "revealing anything: the function of the lion-guise and the bear-apparition is merely to scare."[101] However, as my argument shows, the progressive revelation of the god is precisely the point. Zeus, also, in *Odyssey* 21.413, shows forth his signs (σήματα φαίνων), by thundering, as an omen of favor just before Odysseus shoots.

I posit that the god's anger is not appeased here precisely because of the fact that the point of the poem was for the humans to be able to recognize the god for a god when he manifested supernatural abilities - any abilities that violated the perceived body. When his first supernatural act was not sufficient - for anyone but the helmsman - Dionysus provided further *violations*, the wine, the ambrosial smell, etc.

These further *violations* are of a different sort from the first, which was specifically a *violation* of Dionysus body drawn from the *template* PERSON. The vines growing rapidly from nowhere would be, in terms of the cognitive model used throughout my dissertation, a violation of the *template* PLANT and, at the same time, a *violation* of the *template* OBJECT when the ship produces vines. Within the model drawn from Boyer, these *violations* would make the objects themselves (the vines and/or the ship) supernatural.

However, this is not the case here. Within Greek myth, the occurrences of *supernatural* phenomena in the *presence* of a god are seen as caused by the god and do not make supernatural *concepts* out of other objects. Instead, they are further examples

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lynxes, snakes, birds, and (of course) dolphins." However, in his contest with Deriades Dionysus takes the form of the bear (Dion. xl. 46).

[101] Sparshott (1963).

of the gods, through an ability humans do not have, violating the *template* PERSON. These examples fall within the larger category of attributing phenomena (whether *supernatural* or not) to the gods within Greek literature, especially Archaic poetry. For example, in the *Iliad* the plague in Book One is caused by Apollo and the arrow of Pandarus misses Menelaus in Book Four because of Athena.

Therefore, the recognition of Dionysus as a god based on *violations* of his body is complicated within the *Hymn to Dionysus* because except for the first violation (of being immune to binding), his signs are not based on his body. I offer as an aside, although it is beyond the scope of this work, that this is the reason for the problems found in recognizing Dionysus in most myths. Because Dionysus reveals his divinity through signs away and apart from his body, he does not align with the model of anthropomorphism in the same way as the other gods of the Greek pantheon. This is, of course, both intentional and appropriate for a god whose worship is often an inversion of norms.

The text of the *Hymn to Dionysus*, as expected, does not represent the humans as recognizing Dionysus even with these further signs. There is no recognition of the god, no naming, and no supplicating by the crew, only a desire to remove the captive from the ship. It is because the crew, even at this point in the story, when Dionysus has made his godhood plain and clear, still fails to react to and interact with Dionysus as a god that the resolution must be either death or punishment for them. Only the helmsman who recognized Dionysus as a god in his speech to his comrades is spared (although he failed to guess Dionysus' identity, naming Zeus, Apollo, and Poseidon). To the helmsman

alone does Dionysus actually speak, telling him to have no fear, naming himself "Dionysus," and following this revelation with a blessing on the helmsman.

This analysis of *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* demonstrates how a *violation* of the *template* PERSON ought to lead to a revelation of the god or goddess' divinity to the mortal(s) who witness it. However, only the helmsman recognizes the god in this narrative. Likewise, in the other *Homeric Hymns* the mortals fail to recognize the god or goddesses based on violations of the body. In particular, there are near-epiphanies in both the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*. Each of these examples is discussed in detail below. The mortals' inability to recognize the gods based on violations of the body is part of the larger trope of mortal ignorance which the *Hymns* address and to which they offer solutions, as discussed in Chapter Four.

B. Other Bonds in the *Homeric Hymns*

Dionysus is not the only god in the *Hymns* whom bonds cannot restrain. Apollo's body is also described as unable to be restrained. Apollo's bonds however are those associated with newborns. His lack of bonds correlates with his lack of infancy. Apollo moves directly to his accustomed form of a youth and as such cannot (need not) be restrained the way babies are.

> Once you had eaten the divine food, Phoibos,
> then the golden cords no longer restrained your wriggling,
> the fastenings no longer held you back, but all the ties came undone.
> At once Phoibos Apollo spoke among the goddesses…
>
> Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ Φοῖβε κατέβρως ἄμβροτον εἶδαρ,
> οὔ σέ γ' ἔπειτ' ἴσχον χρύσεοι στρόφοι ἀσπαίροντα,
> οὐδ' ἔτι δεσμά σ' ἔρυκε, λύοντο δὲ πείρατα πάντα.

αὐτίκα δ' ἀθανάτῃσι μετηύδα Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων·
(*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 127-130)

The main difference in these two scenes of "binding" is of course the presence or absence of humans. In Apollo's case, there are no humans present and thus no source of misunderstanding about Apollo's form. However, the idea that a god's body is more or greater – or just plain different – from a human body is being illustrated just as with Dionysus' body.

On either side of the bonds being broken, the text illustrates two other differences. First it displays a difference in sustenance between Apollo and other babies, as Apollo eats divine food, rather than his mother's milk. Only after this divine food is consumed does Apollo break his swaddling bands – bands that were presumably made to contain a god. He could have nursed (divine milk) first and consumed nectar and ambrosia at some later point. Apollo, by skipping this step, is not only different from mortals but also from other gods. The text makes it explicit that Apollo is not nursed by his mother which implies, of course, that he could have and was in fact expected to nurse, but, instead, he was fed nectar and ambrosia by Themis (123-125).

The text illustrates a logical progression from Apollo's birth to his eventual status among the gods. Apollo is "born" much as a human (although with a great deal more labor), but the immediate *violations* of his physical body demonstrate his godhood, his *supernatural* status. Apollo skips the normal stage of nursing and then, after consuming nectar and ambrosia, bursts his swaddling bands. Only after these violations does Apollo declare his divine attributes of the bow, the lyre, and prophecy.

In the *Hymn to Hermes* the progression is different as the text uses the image of Hermes' infant form to play with ideas of communication and mis-communication based on the body. This will be examined later in detail in Chapter Four**.**

C. Non-human Forms

Another way that the *Hymns* portray direct *violations* of the body is when the god appears in a form that is not human at all. Both Apollo and Dionysus assume animal forms, a dolphin and a lion respectively. The shift from a human appearance to an animal appearance does NOT cause the perception of the god to shift completely from the *template* PERSON to the *template* ANIMAL. The animal in question is always and immediately perceived as more than or different from an ANIMAL. The dolphin, in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* is described at its appearance as a portent (πέλωρ), indicating immediately that it is not an ordinary dolphin. The lion and bear in the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus*, as discussed below occur at a point in the text where they are clearly the next in a series of signs of the supernatural which have been displayed (34-46). Further, there is no "normal" way for a lion or a bear to appear on a ship in the middle of the sea. Although the gods can and do deceive humans into accepting them at face value for a time when they assume human shape, they never in the *Hymns* (nor to my knowledge anywhere else) maintain the guise of animal without immediately violating the *template* and precipitating a shift of perception into a *supernatural concept*. Further, any shape-shifting is explained within the text, unlike a human form, which is the expected norm for a god's appearance.

Apollo's assumption of the likeness of a dolphin is the only example in the *Hymns* that allows for this immediate *violation* to be analyzed. Dionysus, by the time he shifted from his human guise to a lion, had already provided multiple signs of his supernatural status, transformed from human to animal in sight of the sailors and displayed a form that in no way belonged in the middle of the ocean. There was no moment when the lion could have been perceived as just a lion. Apollo, on the other hand, approaches the sailors as a dolphin, with no other prior interaction. It is conceivable that Apollo could have been seen by the sailors and accepted merely as a dolphin for any period of time. However, Apollo's first action as a dolphin is to leave behind the animal's natural environment, the sea, and leap onto the ship.

> But he, Phoibos Apollo, intercepted them,
> and out at sea he leaped onto the swift ship in the likeness
> of a dolphin, and lay there, a huge and fearsome beast.
> If any of them thought to observe him,[102]
> he would toss him off in any direction, shaking the ship's timbers.
> So they sat quiet in the ship in terror;
>
> ἔπλεον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσι συνήνετο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων·
> ἐν πόντῳ δ' ἐπόρουσε δέμας δελφῖνι ἐοικὼς
> νηῒ θοῇ, καὶ κεῖτο πέλωρ μέγα τε δεινόν τε·
> τῶν δ' ὅς τις κατὰ θυμὸν ἐπιφράσσαιτο νοῆσαι
> πάντοσ' ἀνασσείασκε, τίνασσε δὲ νήϊα δοῦρα.

[102] There is a problem with the MSS here. Hermann (1806) suggests inserting another line following "νοῆσαι." Allen and Sikes,in their commentary on the *Hymns* (1904) suggest a verse such as "ἐκβάλλειν ἔθελεν δελφῖ?, ὁ δὲ νῆα μέλαιναν." This would supply a translation of, "whoever saw the dolphin [tried to throw it overboard, but the monster] made [the ship] rock all ways." This is not a great stretch since there is a logical connection, I believe, between the sailors inspecting the dolphin and seeking to push it back into its proper realm.

οἱ δ' ἀκέων ἐνὶ νηῒ καθήατο δειμαίνοντες,
οὐδ' οἵ γ' ὅπλ' ἔλυον κοίλην ἀνὰ νῆα μέλαιναν,
(*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 399-405)

The first reaction of the sailors is to inspect this dolphin, perhaps to push it back into its proper place. It is clear from this reaction that they do not yet know that the dolphin is a supernatural, just that it is unnatural. We can see from the helmsman's speech in the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* that the sailors would know to react differently if they had identified the dolphin as supernatural.

Don't lay hands on him, or he may be angered
and raise fierce winds and tempest!"

αὐτίκα, μηδ' ἐπὶ χεῖρας ἰάλλετε μή τι χολωθεὶς
ὄρσῃ ἀργαλέους τ' ἀνέμους καὶ λαίλαπα πολλήν.
(*Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* 23-24)

The sailors ought to have kept their distance from the dolphin. They don't keep their distance, neither if we read νοῆσαι as merely to observe nor if we supply the logical next step of the sailors attempting to return the dolphin to the sea. Any approach to the dolphin is the wrong reaction. Apollo's *violation* of the *template* ANIMAL, when he, as a dolphin shakes the entire ship, triggers the realization for the sailors that they have a supernatural dolphin, in their midst (as opposed to merely an out-of-place dolphin). They react appropriately at this point and withdraw in terror. It is unclear if/when they ever realize that the dolphin is in fact a god or the specific god Apollo.

There is no attempt at communication between the god as a dolphin and the sailors. Apollo's intention is to bring the sailors to Delphi. At first this is accomplished by the wind and the sails that the sailors do not dare to touch/change with the

supernatural dolphin on board. However, after a sufficient period of travel, when they had reached Taenarum, the sailors wished to land and to test the dolphin's intentions.

> They wanted to halt the ship there and disembark
> to consider the wondrous creature, and see
> whether the beast would stay on the deck of the hollow ship
> or plunge off into the salty sea that teems with fish.
> But the well-built craft would not obey the rudder,
> but continued to hold its course past the
> rich Peloponnese; the far-shooting lord Apollo was steering it
> effortlessly with his breath.
>
> οἱ μὲν ἄρ' ἔνθ' ἔθελον νῆα σχεῖν ἠδ' ἀποβάντες
> φράσσασθαι μέγα θαῦμα καὶ ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδέσθαι
> εἰ μενέει νηὸς γλαφυρῆς δαπέδοισι πέλωρον,
> ἢ εἰς οἶδμ' ἅλιον πολυΐχθυον ἀμφὶς ὀρούσει·
> ἀλλ' οὐ πηδαλίοισιν ἐπείθετο νηῦς εὐεργής,
> ἀλλὰ παρὲκ Πελοπόννησον πίειραν ἔχουσα
> ἤϊ' ὁδόν, πνοιῇ δὲ ἄναξ ἑκάεργος Ἀπόλλων
> ῥηϊδίως ἴθυν'·
>
> (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 414-421)

At this point the ship does not respond to the sailors. Apollo is credited with steering the ship with his breath, but this begs the question of what the dolphin is doing? Are we to picture the dolphin as breathing into the sails? Is another manifestation of Apollo producing the breath? Is Apollo simply controlling the winds from his position on the deck? I don't think it is necessary to logically explain the breath at this point, instead, the breath can be seen as fitting the same category as the phenomena discussed in the passages about Dionysus above. The wind (breath), while not clearly, or even necessarily, linked to the body Apollo is currently occupying (that of a dolphin), is a *supernatural* phenomenon which occurs in the presence of a god. As such, it can be attributed to him and seen as one more sign of the divinity of the dolphin.

Apollo's manifestation here, as a dolphin, has nothing to do with his body, in the ways that my model describes the body. That is, he is not manifesting in a form that is intended to allow him to communicate with the mortals on board the ship, nor does he attempt communication.

Apollo's appearance as a dolphin and Dionysus' transformation into a lion are the only instances of the gods assuming animal forms in the *Hymns*. Apollo does take another non-human form when he departs from the Cretan sailor's ship. He leaves like a star in broad daylight. However, this form, like Apollo's dolphin form, does not attempt to communicate with the mortals. This transformation is a method of travel. As discusses in Chapter Two, when the gods travel in the presence of mortals, and in human form, some explanation is always given in order to account for their arrival or departure.[103] Apollo cannot reasonably travel to his temple as a dolphin. Greek myth, it would seem, despite the abundance of phenomena and *supernatural* acts, keeps to narrowly defined rational borders. Even the *supernatural* dolphin will adhere to the limits inherent in the *template* ANIMAL and the *concept* dolphin, except for the *violations* necessary to the narration. Therefore, Apollo must transform in some way in order to travel onto land and up to the temple. If he were to transform to a human form on the deck his epiphany would be immediate, eliminating the following scene wherein, albeit briefly, the sailors mistake Apollo for a mortal. However, as will be discussed below, in the section on epiphanies, Apollo's visit to his temple is a standard step *before*

[103] On the forms the gods assume when they travel, see Krischer (1971) esp. pp. 20-23. For divine travel as simile see Scott (1974 pp. 12).

epiphany. Therefore, the narrator inserts a transformation to a star into the sequence, mirroring Athena's descent from Olympus to break the peace by inciting Pandarus to shoot an arrow at Menelaus in *Iliad* 4.75, and allowing the epiphany to conform to a standard sequence.

II. Epiphanies

Current usage of the term epiphany indicates a sudden realization of meaning and is to a large extent divorced from ideas of religion and the gods. Within Christian religion, modern usage of the term applies to either the feast celebrating the manifestation of Christ or the physical manifestation of the divine in general. Ancient usage does not correlate to these physical ideas, except as used by some later ancient writers.[104] Epiphanies[105] were, to the ancient Greek mindset, any manifestation of a god's power, whether invisible or visible. The manifestations were not only real, but vital, as Fritz Graf states, "Gods were irrelevant if they could not manifest themselves to humans."[106] Graf describes three basic types of epiphany: invisible guidance, such as Homer's "will of Zeus," an invisible manifestation such as a dream or sign, or a visible manifestation.[107]. As Graf demonstrates, outside of literary accounts, epiphanies occurred both to individuals and to collective groups. Those which occurred to an individual were likely

[104] See Cancik (1990) p. 290.

[105] See Pfister (1924) and Cancik (1990).

[106] Graf (2004) p. 113.

[107] Graf (2004) p. 113. Graf also discusses the possibility of the cult statue being equated to the visible manifestation of the god or goddess (2004, p. 124-127).

to be anthropomorphic, but less authoritative, but those which occurred to a collective often took the form of natural phenomena, such as a storm, and were more authoritative.[108]

Within the *Homeric Hymns*, epiphanies take the form of both signs and visible manifestations. The *Homeric Hymns* according to Anton Bierl are *about* the manifestation of the god. In particular, he sees the *Hymn to Dionysus* and the *Hymn to Demeter* as "based entirely on the arrival of the divinity."[109] I agree with this emphasis on the manifestation of the god or goddess in the *Hymns*. However, within the *Hymns*, the traditional markers of "epiphany" do *not* lead to recognition of the god or goddess as divine. As indicated above in the discussion of Dionysus, the physical markers of the supernatural, both the *violation(s)* of the body and the signs of power, do not, ultimately, lead to recognition. Instead, as I will argue below, the god or goddess is not fully recognized until he or she declares himself or herself to the mortals *and* accompanies this declaration with instructions.

Within the *Homeric Hymns* this recognition follows a set sequence. First, the god or goddess will manifest in disguise. Second, there will be some interaction between the god or goddess and the mortal(s) before the recognition. Finally, the actual moment of recognition will be accompanied by physical markers (less important), a declaration of identity, and a set of instructions for the mortal(s). Both Nicholas Richardson and Peter Smith discuss epiphanies in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and the *Homeric Hymn to*

[108] Graf (2004) pp. 118-122. Graf is looking in particular at inscriptions.

[109] Bierl (2004) p. 45.

*Aphrodite*, respectively. I will discuss how my model differs from theirs in detail below, but in general, Richardson focuses on the physical markers leading up to the epiphany and Smith focuses on both the physical markers and the pattern of behavior prior to epiphany. As I will show through an analysis of the near-epiphanies that occur in each of these *Hymns*, it is neither the physical markers nor the pattern of behavior that characterize a full-epiphany, but the god's or goddess' self-declaration and issuing of commands. A full-epiphany only occurs, I argue, when the god or goddess is recognized by the mortal.

In his commentary on the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, Nicholas Richardson details the motifs of the goddess' epiphany. Richardson identifies three motifs that characterize the epiphany of Demeter: the supernatural stature of the deity, the divine radiance which she sheds abroad, and the reactions of reverence, awe, and fear which she arouses.[110] Richardson applies these motifs both to the moment of arrival,[111] when there is a partial, or inchoate, epiphany, and to the moment of departure,[112] when there is a full epiphany. Demeter's arrival at Eleusis illustrates all three of Richardson's motifs.

> Then Demeter stepped onto the threshold: her head
> reached to the rafter, and she filled the doorway with divine radiance.
> The queen was seized by awe and reverence and pale fear;
>
> ἡ δ' ἄρ' ἐπ' οὐδὸν ἔβη ποσὶ καί ῥα μελάθρου
> κῦρε κάρη, πλῆσεν δὲ θύρας σέλαος θείοιο.

[110] Richardson (1974) p. 208 f. Richardson gives a wealth of parallels for each motif from Homer to the New Testament.

[111] *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 188-190.

[112] *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 275-283.

τὴν δ' αἰδώς τε σέβας τε ἰδὲ χλωρὸν δέος εἷλεν
(*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 188-190)

Richardson does not give any reason why the epiphany is incomplete at this point in the text.[113] I argue, in the following sections, that the markers of epiphany as identified by Richardson are all physical in nature - relating to the body the goddess appears to possess. However, none are necessarily direct *violations* of that body. Stature and radiance are attributes that mortals can display as well as gods (as discussed below), and as such, the disguise of the god or goddess can be maintained within the narrative.[114] More importantly, because none of the attributes are direct *violations*, the mortals do not (can not?) recognize the goddess at this point.

Two examples of mortals displaying god-like looks help show why Demeter's appearance is only a partial-epiphany. When Odysseus comes upon Nausicaa in Book 6 of the *Odyssey*, he compares her to a goddess in "looks and stature and form,"[115] but he in no way mistakes her for a goddess. Likewise, gods and goddesses can grant superior

[113] Richardson does link this initial partial epiphany to cult and initiation (p. 209). I will discuss this link in detail in Chapter Four. However, Richardson doesn't give any internal reason for the failure of the initial epiphany moment.

[114] Contrast this to the signs of divinity given by Dionysus as discussed above. The impossibility of binding Dionysus is a clear *violation*, rather than a superlative description. Dionysus' epiphany is one long series of escalating violations, rather than a partial epiphany followed by a complete epiphany as in the *Hymns* to *Demeter*, *Apollo*, and *Aphrodite*.

[115] *Odyssey* 6.152.

appearance to mortals, as Athena does for Odysseus in this same meeting, making him "taller to look upon and stronger."[116]

In his analysis of the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, Peter Smith identifies a sequence of events leading up to epiphany in addition to standard motifs at the moment of revelation.

> The poem will, for reasons we shall see, display Aphrodites's divine nature in stages. Her preparations at Paphos give several, but not all, of the traditional elements which suggest an epiphany: the goddess enters her temple, closing the doors behind her; she comes forth anointed with oil and brilliant with gold; then she moves off toward Ida with the magical swiftness and ease of a god.[117]

Smith, here, identifies the sequence as a withdrawal into a temple, a re-emergence accompanied by divine accoutrements, and a divine departure (or arrival). Later, in the full epiphany we will get the two missing components - the human audience and the issuing of instructions.

Within the Hymns, it is at this moment when the god or goddess speaks and reveals himself or herself to the human audience that a full-epiphany occurs. This revelation always occurs, within the Hymns, for the purpose of communication.[118] The god or goddess reveals himself or herself in order to give instruction to the human

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[116] *Odyssey* 6.230.

[117] Smith (1981) p. 42.

[118] While, as I argue, the god or goddess only manifests in the *Hymns* through and for the purpose of issuing instructions to the mortals, there are many different reasons for epiphany in other literature. For example, in Herodotus 8.84, the Athenian army hears the voice of a woman rebuking them for retreating before the Persians or, famously, in Book One of the *Iliad*, Athena appears to Achilles to prevent him from attacking Agamemnon.

audience. The actual moment of recognition (of the god or goddess as divine) marks the transition from a mode of communication based upon ideas of a shared commonality based in the body (pre-epiphany) to communication based upon ritual.[119] This transition also marks the shift from unsuccessful to successful communication, as I will argue in more depth in Chapter Four.

Regarding epiphanies in Homer,[120] Bernard Dietrich argues that, "the idea of divine epiphany as a means of religious revelation was out of the ordinary for Homer and consequently less familiar to the mainstream of official Greek religion."[121] Dietrich specifically includes the *Homeric Hymns* in his analysis and dismisses any link they may have with "religious practice."[122] Dietrich argues that most so-called epiphanies in Homer, and by extension, in the literature which followed upon and imitated Homer (in which category we must consider the *Hymns*) are neither about disguise nor revelation, but based on poetic convention.

Dietrich analyzes only one example from the *Homeric Hymns* – Apollo's departure from the ship of the Cretan sailors in the likeness of a star.[123] Dietrich

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[119] Richardson (1974) p. 209.

[120] See Pfister (1924) for an exhaustive documentation and categorization of epiphanies in Homer. More recently, see Bremmer (1975), Dietrich (1983), Versnel (1987), Cancik (1990), Graf (1997), and Fernández Contreras (1999).

[121] Dietrich (1983) p. 71.

[122] Dietrich (1983) p. 73.

[123] This scene was discussed earlier in the Chapter, where I argued for an explanation of the star transformation as necessary device within the narrative structure.

disparagingly describes this epiphany as a "poor imitation of Athena's epiphany in *Iliad* iv."[124] Dietrich is wrong, I believe, in seeing Apollo's arrival at his temple as the climactic moment of epiphany in the *Hymn*, rather than Apollo's return in the guise of a mortal, subsequent speech, and self identification to the sailors. Dietrich never defines his use of the term epiphany but, from his examples and conclusion, it is clear that he includes any appearance or interaction with mortals by the god, in any form (inspiration, dream, animal, anthropomorphic, etc.), with or without recognition. Moreover, he fails to notice basic differences between the epiphanies in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and those in the *Homeric Hymns*, where the narrative focuses on the god or goddess. While there are a wealth of examples of varying types and complexity in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, epiphanies in the *Hymns*, as I have discussed above, follow a set sequence starting with the god manifesting himself or herself, leading to some form of interaction with mortals while in disguise, and, finally, ending in a full-fleshed revelation accompanied by physical markers, a declaration of identity, and the deliverance of commands for the mortals. Dietrich's analysis of epiphanies as "poetically contrived" works within the Homeric epics, but fails when applied to the *Hymns*.[125]

The three steps that I identify for the sequence are Manifestation, Interaction, and Recognition. The third step, Recognition, is not synonymous with standard usage of

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[124] Dietrich (1983) p. 71.

[125] Likewise, my model for the bodies of the gods does not apply perfectly in its current conception to the gods in the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. While I disagree with Dietrich's dismissal of all epiphanies within the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as irrelevant to religious revelations, that discussion is beyond the scope of this project.

epiphany, as for example Richardson and Smith use it. Recognition is the final step that includes both the physical signs of divinity, normally equated with epiphany, and the vocal element of self identification, which is, as I argue, the necessary element to recognition and eventually successful communication. Smith's steps are still applicable, but mostly subsumed within these three: withdrawal into a temple, re-emergence accompanied by divine accoutrements, and a divine departure (or arrival) are together descriptive of how a god manifests. The presence of a human audience is implicit in my second category of Interaction. Finally, the issuing of instructions by the gods to the mortals, which normally follows upon the epiphany, is not a marker of epiphany. The instructions are the intended result of the epiphany. The god reveals himself or herself as a god specifically to give the mortals orders.

<table>
<tr><th>Smith</th><th>Buchholz</th></tr>
<tr><td>1. Withdrawal into a temple</td><td rowspan="3">1. Manifestation</td></tr>
<tr><td>2. Re-emergence accompanied by divine accoutrements</td></tr>
<tr><td>3. Divine departure (or arrival)</td></tr>
<tr><td>4. Human audience</td><td>2. Interaction</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>3. Recognition</td></tr>
<tr><td>5. Issuing of instructions</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Figure 11. Comparison of Smith's and Buchholz's models of epiphany.

There are two main differences between the models. First, what are for Smith three markers of epiphany, 1-3 above, are subsumed into my category Manifestation. This is because I disagree with the importance of the physical signs of epiphany. Second, the issuing of instructions which is for Smith the final marker of epiphany is, in my model, the intended result of epiphany.

Demeter, Aphrodite, and Apollo each follow the three-step sequence in achieving their epiphany and follow that epiphany with the issuing of instructions to the mortals. The *Hymn to Dionysus* also follows this pattern, but without the same level of interaction with mortals or a clear-cut set of commands accompanying his epiphany. However, his message *is* the fact that he is a god. As such, there is no need, within the *Hymn*, for Dionysus to issue any instructions. The *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* is an exception to the pattern since his "epiphany" is in his interaction with Apollo, not a mortal. Hermes' uses the appearance of a mortal body, the body of a baby, to create confusion in the communication between himself and Apollo. There is no true epiphany, as there was never any true misunderstanding based upon a mortal's assumptions about the god's body. Hermes' case is discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

A. Manifestation

Demeter's arrival at Eleusis follows upon her withdrawal from the company of the Olympian gods and her assumption of a human form that denies her status as a goddess. Demeter arrives in Eleusis appearing to be an old, barren woman.[126]

> and she is like to an ancient woman who is cut off from
> childbearing
>
> γρηΐ παλαιγενέϊ ἐναλίγκιος, ἥ τε τόκοιο
> εἴργηται
>
> (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 101-102)

Demeter's form as an old woman is a disguise for her divinity as it masks the very nature of her powers.[127] Warren Smith analyses the disguises of the gods in the Iliad concluding that their attempts to pass for human are often aberrant, that they fail to pass for fully anthropomorphic.

> There is often a kind of holiday atmosphere to a god's earthly visit. Their attempts to look human have a sportive quality which does not always seem consistent with deliberate deception. Aphrodite's flimsy getup as an "old woman" fails to cover up adequately her divine neck, breast, and eyes (396-7), and Helen knows quickly that she is addressing her old confidante and adversary. (In the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, 81 sq., the goddess is likewise completely unconvincing when she tries to disguise herself as a "virgin".)[128]

[126] For more on the significance of Demeter's choice of an old body see the discussion in Chapter Four.

[127] For the view that the gods' epiphanies are actually symbolic of the internal struggles of men see Otto (1979); Willcock (1978); Dodds (1951).

[128] Smith (1988) p. 167. I maintain that Aphrodite is in fact somewhat successful at disguising herself as a virgin, but that it has nothing to do with her clothing or ornaments and everything to do with her story.

In his discussion of epiphanies, Peter Smith marks Aphrodite's emergence from her temple on Paphos as "anointed with oil and brilliant with gold."[129] The adornments of the goddess are, in his discussion, one of the stages in displaying her divine nature. However, as Smith goes on to comment, what Aphrodite is doing in this scene is not revealing her divine nature, but disguising it.

> Since she wants to seduce Anchises, she wants to appear as much like herself as possible short of frightening him by showing herself unmistakably a goddess; her disguise must depend on lessening the degree of her divine beauty while not altering it in kind. This is a hard job under the circumstances, and to an uncertain but probably large extent she fails – no doubt to her father's satisfaction.[130]

The scene parallels Demeter's attempt to mask the specific nature of her divinity. Demeter masks her divinity by assuming a form that is the inverse of her true nature, that of an old woman. Aphrodite, masks hers by resorting to the sorts of adornment that are, as the text makes clear, unnecessary to her.[131]

> Going to Cyprus, to Paphos, she disappeared into her
> fragrant temple; it is there that she has her precinct and scented altar.
> There she went in, and closed the gleaming doors,
> and there the Graces bathed her and rubbed her with olive oil,
> divine oil, such as is on the eternal gods,
> ambrosial bridal oil that she had ready perfumed.
> Her body well clad in all her fine garments,
> adorned with gold…
>
> ἐς Κύπρον δ' ἐλθοῦσα θυώδεα νηὸν ἔδυνεν
> ἐς Πάφον· ἔνθα δέ οἱ τέμενος βωμός τε θυώδης·

[129] Smith (1981) p. 42.

[130] Smith (1981) p. 42-42.

[131] Despite Aphrodite's preparations and speech about her mortal origins, Anchises remains unconvinced until she "casts sweet longing into his heart" (143). This ability to cast longing into another's heart is the very ability of Aphrodite that Zeus seeks to contain by causing her to pursue Anchises.

ἔνθ' ἥ γ' εἰσελθοῦσα θύρας ἐπέθηκε φαεινάς.
ἔνθα δέ μιν Χάριτες λοῦσαν καὶ χρῖσαν ἐλαίῳ
ἀμβρότῳ, οἷα θεοὺς ἐπενήνοθεν αἰὲν ἐόντας,
ἀμβροσίῳ ἑδανῷ, τό ῥά οἱ τεθυωμένον ἦεν.
ἑσσαμένη δ' εὖ πάντα περὶ χροῒ εἵματα καλὰ
χρυσῷ κοσμηθεῖσα

(*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 58-65)

This scene parallels Aphrodite's retreat to Paphos after being caught in Hephaistos' net in Odyssey 8.[132] Smith comments on the differences in the two scenes, in particular the emphasis laid on the immortal oil.[133] Smith remarks on the symbolic nature of covering her body in ambrosial oil before coming into contact, in the closest possible way, with a nature opposite her own, i.e. that of a mortal man. The idea that Aphrodite's body (presumable some "real" but divine body) can be compromised by contact with Anchises is intriguing. However, in my analysis, the bodies that the gods assume when interacting with mortals are always false. In this model, Aphrodite has assumed a mortal appearance which she is then augmenting with the addition of an immortal layer (the ambrosial oil). More useful are Smith's comments on the actual initial meeting of Anchises and Aphrodite, in which Anchises is a mortal who looks like a god (Ἀγχίσην ἥρωα θεῶν ἅπο κάλλος ἔχοντα),[134] while Aphrodite is a goddess who looks like a mortal.

[132] *Odyssey* 8.362 ff.

[133] Smith (1981) p.42 and 114 n.

[134] *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 77.

The paradox created by bodies that are other than they seem to be is what I argue creates the possibility for misunderstanding(s) throughout the text.[135]

If we compare Aphrodite's and Demeter's manifestations to Apollo's manifestation to the Cretan sailors we can see that Apollo's is different from that of Aphrodite or Demeter. Apollo first appears as a dolphin, as discussed above. He then departs from the ship like a star. However, it is only after he has travelled as a star to his temple and reappeared in the likeness of a young man that the sequence leading to Apollo's epiphany truly begins. Smith compares Apollo's departure to his temple and his reappearance to that of Aphrodite.

> "the god even makes a separate trip up from Itea to Delphi, before returning to conduct his new Cretan priests over the same ground, for the sole purpose of manifesting his presence to his worshippers at Delphi…"[136]

While Apollo's removal to a temple and subsequent reappearance mirrors Aphrodite's (and to an extent, Demeter's withdrawal from the gods and reappearance among mortals), his story lacks the extra element of disguise which is prominent in both Aphrodite's and Demeter's narratives.

> From there he flew back to the ship, fast as thought,
> in the likeness of a young man, sturdy and vigorous in his first prime,
> his hair falling over his broad shoulders,
> and he addressed them in winged words.
>
> ἔνθεν δ′ αὖτ′ ἐπὶ νῆα νόημ′ ὠς ἄλτο πέτεσθαι
> ἀνέρι εἰδόμενος αἰζηῷ τε κρατερῷ τε
> πρωθήβῃ, χαίτης εἰλυμένος εὐρέας ὤμους·

[135] There is an added level to the paradox in that Aphrodite's "false" body suffers the bodily result of intercourse, pregnancy. It is Aphrodite's "body" that is (necessarily) changed by the encounter.

[136] Smith (1981) p. 114 n.

καί σφεας φωνήσας ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα·
(*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 448-451)

Apollo manifests in a form that is without additional disguise (beyond his mortal form). Apollo looks just like a mortal man, with no extra levels to his disguise (unlike Demeter's old age and Aphrodite's ornaments). This is due to the difference in the narrative from that of Aphrodite and Demeter. The next step in the sequence would normally be the interaction between the god, in disguise or not, and the mortals. However, Apollo's interaction will be brief, only a speech welcoming the sailors and their response precede Apollo's revelation. Apollo does not need to be anything more or other than an impressive male. However, Aphrodite must seduce Achnises and uses the human means of jewelry and perfumes. As Apollo, Dionysus is not disguised in any additional way beyond his mortal form and his narrative also moves almost directly into the final stage of revelation. The Homeric Hymn to Dionysus consists of 59 lines. He appears in the likeness of a young man in line 3 and begins to give signs of his divinity already in line 12. There is no attempt at communication before the final revelation of Dionysus as a god, as discussed in above.

Overall, in the Homeric Hymns, the manifestation of the god or goddess is not directly linked to the recognition of his or her divinity by the mortal or mortals encountered. Instead, the form assumed by the god or goddess is in reaction to the situation and is maintained throughout the next stage, interaction.

B. Interaction

In each of these scenes ( for Apollo, Demeter, and Aphrodite) one of the first interactions between the mortals and the disguised gods is a "near recognition" – a moment of inchoate epiphany which must be delayed in order to allow the remainder of the interaction to run its course before the true and final epiphany. In both the Hymn to Apollo and the Hymn to Aphrodite, this near recognition (pre-epiphany) is reflected in the opening address of the mortal(s) to the god or goddess.

> Sir, as you don't seem at all like a mortal
> in body and stature, but like the immortal gods,
> I bid you all hail, and may the gods grant you blessings.
>
> ξεῖν', ἐπεὶ οὐ μὲν γάρ τι καταθνητοῖσιν ἔοικας,
> οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν, ἀλλ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσιν,
> οὗλέ τε καὶ μέγα χαῖρε, θεοὶ δέ τοι ὄλβια δοῖεν.
> (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo 464-466*)

> Hail, Lady, whichever of the blessed ones you are that arrive at this dwelling,
> Artemis or Leto or golden Aphrodite,
> high-born Themis or steely-eyed Athena;
> or perhaps you are one of the Graces come here, who are companions
> to all the gods and are called immortal;
> or one of the nymphs,…
>
> Χαῖρε ἄνασσ', ἥ τις μακάρων τάδε δώμαθ' ἱκάνεις,
> Ἄρτεμις ἢ Λητὼ ἠὲ χρυσέη Ἀφροδίτη
> ἢ Θέμις ἠϋγενὴς ἠὲ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη
> ἤ πού τις Χαρίτων δεῦρ' ἤλυθες, αἵ τε θεοῖσι
> πᾶσιν ἑταιρίζουσι καὶ ἀθάνατοι καλέονται,
> ἤ τις νυμφάων
> (*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite 92-97*)

These greetings seem like acknowledgements of the gods or goddess' divinity (especially in the Hymn to Aphrodite).[137] In fact, after having addressed the god or goddess thus, it seems almost incredible that the mortals can then backtrack and assume that they are addressing anyone other than a god or goddess. This parallels a type of scene found in epic in which a stranger is addressed as if a god or goddess. Odysseus greeting Nausicaa in Book 6 of the Odyssey is a good example of this. it becomes obvious that this greeting is to a large extent merely a motif and not a true recognition.

> If you are some god, one of those who hold wide heaven,
> I liken you most closely to Artemis,
> daughter of great Zeus,in form and stature and beauty.
>
> εἰ μέν τις θεός ἐσσι, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν,
> Ἀρτέμιδί σε ἐγώ γε, Διὸς κούρῃ μεγάλοιο,
> εἶδός τε μέγεθός τε φυήν τ' ἄγχιστα ἐΐσκω·
> (*Odyssey* 6.150-152)

This form of address does not necessarily signal a recognition of the divine, but, instead, politeness or caution on the part of the speaker. That is, if you are, in fact, addressing a divinity, you had better say so, and if you are wrong, the mortal who has been mistaken for a god or goddess is at least flattered. The author of the Hymn is using this standard form of greeting, but, due to the emphasis on the eventual recognition of a god or goddess in the Hymns as a whole, leaves open the possibility that Anchises has actually recognized the goddess.

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[137] In particular, Anchises' greeting takes the form of a prayer. He begins with a list of several names - to make sure that the correct name is included. He then continues with a claim on a special relationship, here the promise to build a temple and make offerings (100-102). Finally, he concludes with a request for blessings (102-106). See Burkert, (1985, pp. 74-75), for standard prayer patterns.

Smith, in his analysis of the Hymn to Aphrodite, gives two different readings of Anchises' "near recognition." The first is to attribute to the narrator of the Hymn the intention of keeping Anchises from being "the mere dupe of a disguise, a man unable to suspect something uncanny in the presence of such a woman (dressed as she is!) on the lonely mountain slope."[138]

Smith's second reading has to do more specifically with the stages of epiphany. In the final stage, Smith identifies the feeling of wonder and awe inspired by the goddess as a major component. Here, due to Aphrodite's disguise, Anchises feels only wonder at the sight (θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι) and not yet awe (ταρβος).[139] While this reading works well for Smith's analysis of the Hymn to Aphrodite, it is problematic for the partial epiphany of Demeter upon entering the household of Metaneira.

> Then Demeter stepped onto the threshold: her head
> reached to the rafter, and she filled the doorway with divine radiance.
> The queen was seized by awe and reverence and pale fear;
>
> ἡ δ' ἄρ' ἐπ' οὐδὸν ἔβη ποσὶ καί ῥα μελάθρου
> κῦρε κάρη, πλῆσεν δὲ θύρας σέλαος θείοιο.
> τὴν δ' αἰδώς τε σέβας τε ἰδὲ χλωρὸν δέος εἶλεν
> (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 188-190)

If feelings of awe or fear are what trigger the final epiphany then Demeter's arrival fulfills the requirements. However, by comparing all of the Hymns, as opposed to any particular one, it becomes obvious that it is neither the visible markers (Richardson)

[138] Smith (1981) pp. 45.

[139] Smith (1981) pp. 45.

nor the feelings of the mortals (Smith) that mark the moment of epiphany, but the speech of the god or goddess.

C. Revelation

Apollo's self revelation comes almost immediately upon the heels of his having manifested in human form.

> For I am Zeus' son, I declare myself Apollo;
> and I brought you here over the depths of the sea
> not with any ill intent, but you are to occupy my rich temple here
> which is greatly honored by all men,
> and you shall know the gods' intentions.
>
> εἰμὶ δ᾽ ἐγὼ Διὸς υἱός, Ἀπόλλων δ᾽ εὔχομαι εἶναι,
> ὑμέας δ᾽ ἤγαγον ἐνθάδ᾽ ὑπὲρ μέγα λαῖτμα θαλάσσης
> οὔ τι κακὰ φρονέων, ἀλλ᾽ ἐνθάδε πίονα νηὸν
> ἕξετ᾽ ἐμὸν πᾶσιν μάλα τίμιον ἀνθρώποισι,
> βουλάς τ᾽ ἀθανάτων εἰδήσετε
> (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 480-484)

There is no narrative reason for him to have appeared in disguise at all. Instead, I argue, the narrator is influenced by the pattern – manifestation, interaction, and revelation – and as a result, creates the brief exchange between Apollo and sailors that precedes the self declaration of his identity and his instructions.

In the *Hymn to Dionysus*, as stated above, the entire narrative is composed of the three steps to epiphany. Dionysus manifests on the shoreline, is abducted and "interacts" with the mortals through a series of increasingly violent portents, and, finally, declares his identity to the helmsman.

> "Be not afraid, good mariner(?), dear to my heart.
> I am Dionysus the mighty roarer, born to
> Cadmus' daughter Semele in union of love with Zeus."

Θάρσει † δῖ' ἑκάτωρ τῷ ἐμῷ κεχαρισμένε θυμῷ·
εἰμὶ δ' ἐγὼ Διόνυσος ἐρίβρομος ὃν τέκε μήτηρ
Καδμηΐς Σεμέλη Διὸς ἐν φιλότητι μιγεῖσα.
(*Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* 55-57)[140]

Dionysus' revelation lacks the clear set of commands found in the *Hymns to Apollo*, *Demeter*, and *Aphrodite*. While he does issue the standard command of the sort "do not fear", there is no ritual link to his commands. However, as stated above, Dionysus' message is the fact that he *is* a divinity. As such, there is not need for a set of instructions, merely the recognition.

Demeter's final epiphany is perhaps the clearest, as she manifests by declaring her identity, commanding a temple, and promising the mortals that she will instruct them on rites.

For I am Demeter the honored one, who is the greatest
boon and joy to immortals and mortals.
Now, let the whole people build me a great temple with an altar below it,
under the citadel's sheer wall, above Kallichoron, where the hill juts out.
As to the rites, I myself will instruct you on how in the future
you can propitiate me with holy performance.

εἰμὶ δὲ Δημήτηρ τιμάοχος, ἥ τε μέγιστον
ἀθανάτοις θνητοῖσί τ' ὄνεαρ καὶ χάρμα τέτυκται.
ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι νηόν τε μέγαν καὶ βωμὸν ὑπ' αὐτῷ
τευχόντων πᾶς δῆμος ὑπαὶ πόλιν αἰπύ τε τεῖχος
Καλλιχόρου καθύπερθεν ἐπὶ προὔχοντι κολωνῷ·
ὄργια δ' αὐτὴ ἐγὼν ὑποθήσομαι ὡς ἂν ἔπειτα
εὐαγέως ἕρδοντες ἐμὸν νόον ἱλάσκοισθε.
(*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 268-274)

In fact, in the Hymn to Demeter, it is the sequence of events that is most interesting. Demeter's withdrawal to her temple and re-emergence to give the rites follow

[140] See Allen and Sikes (1904) for textual problems in line 55.

her moment of epiphany rather than precede it as in the Hymns to Apollo and Aphrodite. However, it is the moment that she is physically recognizable as a goddess that makes this unique. The goddess, who was nearly recognized when she first entered the house of Metaneira, based on physical signs, does not show any of the physical markers of a goddess until after she has declared herself and demanded a temple to be built.

> With these words the goddess changed her form and stature,
> thrusting old age away; beauty wafted all about her,
> a lovely fragrance spread from her scented dress,
> and a radiance shone afar from her immortal body;
> flaxen locks bestrewed her shoulders,
> and the sturdy house was filled with a brilliance as of lightning as she went out through the hall.
>
> Ὣς εἰποῦσα θεὰ μέγεθος καὶ εἶδος ἄμειψε
> γῆρας ἀπωσαμένη, περί τ' ἀμφί τε κάλλος ἄητο·
> ὀδμὴ δ' ἱμερόεσσα θυηέντων ἀπὸ πέπλων
> σκίδνατο, τῆλε δὲ φέγγος ἀπὸ χροὸς ἀθανάτοιο
> λάμπε θεᾶς, ξανθαὶ δὲ κόμαι κατενήνοθεν ὤμους,
> αὐγῆς δ' ἐπλήσθη πυκινὸς δόμος ἀστεροπῆς ὥς
> βῆ δὲ διὲκ μεγάρων
>
> (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 275-280)

Demeter's physical epiphany is almost an afterthought. None of the physical markers of divinity are what trigger the recognition for the mortals; in fact the Hymn has gone to great lengths to demonstrate that physical markers, no matter how obvious, fail. It is only through the moment of speech and ritual instructions that a recognition can be made.

I will take this point one step further in the next Chapter to show how it is only once this sort of recognition has occurred that communication is successful.

The final epiphany that needs to be considered is that of Aphrodite. I have argued so far that the moment of true epiphany occurs through the self identification by the god

or goddess, i.e. "I am Apollo" or "I am Demeter." The Hymn to Aphrodite plays with the ordering of these elements. Aphrodite does speak, commanding Anchises to look at her, but she requires him to see the physical markers of divinity that were not important in the epiphanies of Apollo and Demeter.

> "Be up, descendant of Dardanus - why do you slumber in unbroken sleep?
> - and mark whether I look to you
> like I did when you first set eyes on me."
>
> Ὄρσεο Δαρδανίδη· τί νυ νήγρετον ὕπνον ἰαύεις;
> καὶ φράσαι εἴ τοι ὁμοίη ἐγὼν ἰνδάλλομαι εἶναι
> οἵην δή με τὸ πρῶτον ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσι νόησας;
> (*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 177-179)

The difference is appropriate for Aphrodite's *nature* as a goddess of love. Smith remarks on the delayed content of Aphrodite's speech also relating it to her *nature*.

> Although she speaks first, as she must, and in the voice of command, as she ought, and although she says things we are ready enough to hear, she is allowed to say nothing so new in this speech that we do not read Anchises' reaction on waking as a reaction simply to her *appearance* – which here above all means to her *nature* as a divinity.[141]

What Smith adds is a focus on Anchises' reaction, a shift from wonder (θαύμαινέν) to fear (τάρβησέν).[142] This fear is one of the markers of epiphany identified by Smith which was absent from Aphrodite's original meeting with Anchises and it is, for him, the significant difference between the scene of partial epiphany and full epiphany.

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[141] Smith (1981) pp. 64.

[142] Smith (1981) pp. 65.

As I stated above, the fear inspired by Aphrodite is not the true marker of the full epiphany, based on a comparison to Demeter's partial epiphany. Instead, what occurs here is an emphasis on the physical, visible aspect of Aphrodite's nature and an allusion in Anchises' reaction to other versions of the myth[143] which include the fulfillment of his fear – that he will not enjoy "vital vigor" due to his having shared a bed with a goddess.[144] After Anchises' speech, Aphrodite then begins one long narrative (192-290), which ends with an emphasis on the command "to keep silent" and her identity as Cytherea.

Conclusion

Direct *violations* of the body, while not common in the *Homeric Hymns*, do occur and, when they do, they ought to lead directly to recognition of the god. The example of Dionysus makes this clear. Recognition should follow upon the *violation* of bodily limits that occurs when he is unable to be bound. Dionysus remains unrecognized in the *Hymn to Dionysus* except by the helmsman, which highlights a larger issue with recognition. When the gods display their divinity, and are recognized, it is not actually based on physical markers (as the partial-epiphanies of both Aphrodite and Demeter make clear). That is, in the *Homeric Hymns*, a *violation* of the body is not sufficient cause to recognize a god. As I argue, the *Hymns* do not portray recognition as based on physical markers.

[143] See Smith, (1981, p. 142 n.), for a summary of versions where Anchises is lamed or struck impotent.

[144] For the "Oriental" mythologeme of the disastrous consequences of being loved by a goddess, see Rose (1924) and Piccaluga (1974, pp. 9-35).

Instead, recognition is only achieved by the self identification of the god or goddess. This self identification is done for the purpose of the god or goddess issuing instructions. Three stages, which lead up to the issuing of instructions, were identified here: One, a god manifests; two, the god interacts with mortal(s); three, the god reveals himself or herself, specifically through a spoken self identification. It is only after the god has been revealed and recognized by the mortal(s) that successful communication occurs, the issuing of instructions. This communication is about ritual or cultic behavior. The ritual aspects of the *Hymns*, especially as they relate to communication, will be the focus of the next Chapter.

# CHAPTER 4

## PERCEPTION OF THE BODY, ENACTMENT OF THE RITUAL

As I have argued up to this point, communication between mortals and immortals throughout the *Homeric Hymns* fails whenever that communication is represented as having been based upon assumptions derived from the *template* PERSON which appear in the texts as perceptions of the physical body. However, another form of communication emerges in these poems that is successful, communication based on ritual. The communication itself does not need to be during or reflecting ritual, but the text must refer to ritual, for the communication to be successful. This reference can be to a pattern of behavior, such as the *aichrologia*, or a cultic object, such as the *kykeon* in the *Hymn to Demeter*. The reflected ritual need not be connected to any "real" ritual outside the text. The communication based upon ritual succeeds both in being completed as an action and as being completed to the correct result (intention) of each side, mortals and immortals. Thus an example of unsuccessful communication would be when Demeter implies to Metaneira that she will be only a nurse to Demophon. This communication is unsuccessful because Demeter does not behave according to Metaneira's expectations based on the conversation (and Metaneira's assumptions about Demeter's physical status as an old woman). A simple example of successful

communication is when Demeter demands that the Eleusinians build her a temple. That they succeeded in performing to Demeter's expectations is evidenced by the fact that she, upon completion of the temple, occupies it. These examples are both discussed in depth below.

While the presence of a reference to ritual is the key factor I identify as necessary for successful communication, the reference to ritual within the text does not cause successful communication. Instead, the text represents successful communication as only occurring under certain conditions and those conditions are the presence of ritual references. Each instance of failed communication is the result of that communication having been based on an understanding of the physical body. This includes both the mortals' perceptions of the gods as embodied and limited by those bodies (e.g. Metaneira perceiving Demeter as an old woman rather than as a goddess) and the immortals' inability to understand the concerns of the mortals as they relate to the body (e.g. Demeter's inability to empathize with Metaneira's fear at seeing her son Demophon being placed in the fire).

I established in Chapters Two and Three the various ways in which the *Hymns* treat the perceptions of the gods' bodies – the allocation of skills, indirect and direct *violations*. I also discussed epiphanies and how the god or goddess is not revealed to the mortals by physical markers but by a self-revelation through speech.[145] The

[145] While epiphanies can occur at the same time as successful communication, it is not the god's epiphany that is the necessary condition for successful communication, but the reflected ritual that is

concern felt about and attention paid to issues of how the gods appear to and interact with mortals while in their anthropomorphic forms is abundantly clear. However, it is the way that communication is represented during these interactions that is the main concern, I argue, of the *Homeric Hymns*.

In this Chapter, I will demonstrate how the *Hymns* not only represent communication based on the body as unsuccessful, as I discussed in Chapter Three, but also how the *Hymns* represent communication based on ritual as successful. I will demonstrate this through a close reading of each *Hymn* except that to Dionysus. (The *Hymn to Dionysus*, as I argued in Chapter Three, is not about communication except as it pertains to recognizing the god.)

## I. Demeter

### A. Communication Based on the Body

When Demeter comes to Eleusis, disguised as a mortal, the humans whom she encounters make certain assumptions about her, and their subsequent actions and communications are based upon these assumptions. The most important of these assumptions is that she is in fact limited by and to the bodily form in which she appears. The form Demeter takes is that of an old woman:

> "and she is like to an ancient woman who is cut off from childbearing"
>
> γρηΐ παλαιγενέϊ ἐναλίγκιος, ἥ τε τόκοιο

---

also present in the narrative. For this reason, I grouped the discussion of epiphanies in Chapter Three with direct *violations* of the body and unsuccessful communication.

εἴργηται

(*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 101-102)

This disguise requires more than a physical appearance. Demeter needs to reinforce her purely physical disguise with an explanation for that physical presence. Demeter tells a narrative about who she is and how she got to Eleusis in response to a question from the daughters. Demeter's story is one of kidnap and escape.

> My dears, good day to you, whoever of womankind you are.
> I will tell you; it is not improper,
> since you ask, to tell you the truth.
> Dos is my name that my lady mother gave me.
> But now I have come from Crete over the sea's broad back,
> not from choice, but by force, against my will,
> some pirates took me away. They put in
> at Thorikos in their swift ship; the women all disembarked,
> and they themselves set about preparing their supper
> by the ship's stern cables.
> But I had no appetite for dinner's delights:
> I slipped away over the dark land
> and fled from those imperious ruffians to stop
> them selling me unbought and profiting from my sale value.
> that is how I have come wandering here. I don't know
> what country it is or who are its people.

τέκνα φίλ' αἵ τινές ἐστε γυναικῶν θηλυτεράων
χαίρετ', ἐγὼ δ' ὑμῖν μυθήσομαι· οὔ τοι ἀεικὲς
ὑμῖν εἰρομένῃσιν ἀληθέα μυθήσασθαι.
† Δὼς ἐμοί γ' ὄνομ' ἐστί· τὸ γὰρ θέτο πότνια μήτηρ·
νῦν αὖτε Κρήτηθεν ἐπ' εὐρέα νῶτα θαλάσσης
ἤλυθον οὐκ ἐθέλουσα, βίῃ δ' ἀέκουσαν ἀνάγκῃ
ἄνδρες ληϊστῆρες ἀπήγαγον. οἱ μὲν ἔπειτα
νηῒ θοῇ Θορικὸν δὲ κατέσχεθον, ἔνθα γυναῖκες
ἠπείρου ἐπέβησαν ἀολλέες ἠδὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ
δεῖπνον ἐπηρτύνοντο παρὰ πρυμνήσια νηός·
ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ οὐ δόρποιο μελίφρονος ἤρατο θυμός,
λάθρῃ δ' ὁρμηθεῖσα δι' ἠπείροιο μελαίνης
φεῦγον ὑπερφιάλους σημάντορας, ὄφρα κε μή με
ἀπριάτην περάσαντες ἐμῆς ἀποναίατο τιμῆς.
οὕτω δεῦρ' ἱκόμην ἀλαλημένη, οὐδέ τι οἶδα
ἥ τις δὴ γαῖ' ἐστὶ καὶ οἵ τινες ἐγγεγάασιν.

(*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 119-134)

Demeter's story is not really about her supposed name or her background and homeland in Crete but is instead a way to account for her arrival in Eleusis, in terms of bodily limitations. The story of a kidnapping and escape allows for Demeter's presence in Eleusis and her need for shelter and aid.

There is a second example in the *Hymns* of a god telling a story (a *false* story) to account for an arrival in terms of the body she is represented as having and being limited to. In the *Hymn to Aphrodite*, Aphrodite tells Anchises that Hermes snatched her from a festival and brought her from Phrygia to Troy.

> But now the gold-wand Argus-slayer has snatched me up
> from the dance of golden-shafted Artemis who delights in the call of the
> hunt. There were many of us, brides and marriageable girls,
> dancing, and a vast crowd ringed us about:
> from there the god-wand Argus-slayer snatched me,
> and brought me over much farmland of mortal men,
> and much ownerless and uncultivated land where
> ravening beasts roam about their shadowy haunts;
> I felt that my feet were not touching the grain-growing earth.
>
> νῦν δέ μ' ἀνήρπαξε χρυσόρραπις Ἀργειφόντης
> ἐκ χοροῦ Ἀρτέμιδος χρυσηλακάτου κελαδεινῆς.
> πολλαὶ δὲ νύμφαι καὶ παρθένοι ἀλφεσίβοιαι
> παίζομεν, ἀμφὶ δ' ὅμιλος ἀπείριτος ἐστεφάνωτο·
> ἔνθεν μ' ἥρπαξε χρυσόρραπις Ἀργειφόντης,
> πολλὰ δ' ἔπ' ἤγαγεν ἔργα καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων,
> πολλὴν δ' ἄκληρόν τε καὶ ἄκτιτον, ἣν διὰ θῆρες
> ὠμοφάγοι φοιτῶσι κατὰ σκιόεντας ἐναύλους,
> οὐδὲ ποσὶ ψαύσειν ἐδόκουν φυσιζόου αἴης·
> (*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 117-125)

Aphrodite's explanation, like Demeter's, accounts for her sudden arrival, in terms that maintain her bodily limits. While Demeter attributes her arrival to mortal interference, Aphrodite attributes it to the god Hermes. Each explanation involves a

matter of necessity imposed upon the goddess by an outside force. Their stories describe their bodies as something that others might act upon.

Each of these explanations is for a lone female's presence. It is necessary to explain to the mortals in the narrative just how and why a female (Demeter or Aphrodite) is wandering alone in a foreign country. Both being kidnapped by pirates (Demeter) and interference by a god (Aphrodite) help to account for the presence of the female, maintaining the possibility that she can assume a proper place in human society. For Demeter, the place is that of a respectable older woman, the sort to whom you might entrust a child. For Aphrodite, the place is that of a marriage prospect for Anchises.

Demeter's presence among the mortals at Eleusis involves a disguise and that disguise requires more than bodily appearances. It needs a story that accounts for her presence in terms of that body. Her abilities (here her presumed "mortal" abilities) also require a story. As a goddess, Demeter has certain characteristics[146] – she is a Mother goddess associated with fertility (mainly crops).[147] Her characteristics among the mortals at Eleusis both reflect and deny this attribute. In terms of her mortal body she is the opposite of what you would expect from a goddess of fertility - she is barren. But in terms of her skill set, she maintains her kourotrophic function and will draw upon this in caring for Demophon.

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[146] For more on the allocation of skills among the gods, see Chapter Two.

[147] Burkert (1985) pp. 159-161.

Demeter asks the young women, the daughters of Keleos, where she should go to seek aid. Her request contains in its wording a description of what sort of labor she is suited to. In describing her skills (here) Demeter limits them to those tasks the bodily form in which she has manifested would be able to perform.

> And tell me kindly, my dears, to whose house I am to go,
> what man's and wife's, so that I can do for them
> with a will such work as suits a woman past her prime.
> I could hold a baby in my arms
> and nurse him well, I could look after the house,
> and make the master's bed in the sturdy chamber's recess,
> and teach the women their tasks.
>
> προφρονέως φίλα τέκνα τέων πρὸς δώμαθ' ἵκωμαι
> ἀνέρος ἠδὲ γυναικός, ἵνα σφίσιν ἐργάζωμαι
> πρόφρων οἷα γυναικὸς ἀφήλικος ἔργα τέτυκται·
> καί κεν παῖδα νεογνὸν ἐν ἀγκοίνησιν ἔχουσα
> καλὰ τιθηνοίμην καὶ δώματα τηρήσαιμι
> καί κε λέχος στορέσαιμι μυχῷ θαλάμων εὐπήκτων
> δεσπόσυνον καί κ' ἔργα διαθρήσαιμι γυναικός.
> (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 138-144)

Demeter, above, describes herself as "a woman past her prime" (γυναικὸς ἀφήλικος). The body, to which she has chosen to limit herself, is itself limited. She, a goddess, who ought not to be limited in any way by a body, here tells a story about her body's limitations due to age.

Demeter's description of her own body and its abilities, to nurse a baby, to work around the house and to teach other women their tasks, noticeably leaves out the major function of a female body - childbearing. It is Demeter's assumption of an *old* body that creates the necessity for this set of skills in her story to the daughters of Keleos. If Demeter had appeared in a different form, for example a young body, her

skills would be different. However, this choice of an old body, past childbearing, has a purpose within the narrative.

First, by assuming the limits of the mortal body (both in appearance and in her self narrative) Demeter has (while she maintains those limits) left behind her status as a goddess and limited herself to the mortal sphere. This limitation is a necessary step in the transition she will make entering the household of Metaneira. This transition will be accomplished through a ritual internal to the text, and will allow for one of the two partially-successful moments of communication within the *Hymns* prior to epiphany.[148] The second purpose behind Demeter's choice of a limited body is that it is a direct response to the "mortal limitation" placed on her daughter Persephone by her location in the Underworld. Demeter plays out this limitation and tests it, through herself and the surrogate child Demophon. Ultimately, as a result of her inability to understand the mortal body, Demeter cannot accept or alter its limits, neither those of her own assumed body nor those of Demophon's real one. Therefore, the partially-successful communication fails, and the *Hymns* turns to epiphany and, eventually, communication based upon ritual.

i. Demeter Limits Herself to the Mortal Sphere

Demeter's assumption of the mortal body and its limitations effectively removes her from the realm of the gods and places her among mortals. However, there are several steps between Demeter leaving the gods and properly entering the

[148] The other partially-successful epiphany is in the *Hymn to Aphrodite*, discussed below.

mortal sphere. Just after discovering what has become of her daughter, Persephone, Demeter assumes the appearance of an old woman and journeys to Eleusis. Demeter, a goddess of fertility, is now a woman who cannot produce (101-102). In order to disguise herself and grieve in peace, unknown, among mortals, she has chosen the antithesis of one of her own defining attributes.

Further, when Demeter first enters the house of Metaneira, she rejects the offerings of food and drink. Helene Foley comments that, "Giver of gifts and the seasons (192) and receiver of sacrifices, Demeter here accepts no gifts. In the *Iliad* the consumption of food and drink by the mourning Achilleus signals a preliminary acceptance (in the form of a return to normal behavior) of the loss of Patroklos."[149]

Foley's observation here is not entirely appropriate in terms of the narrative context. What Demeter rejects upon entering the house of Metaneira are not the gifts due to a god or goddess but the gifts due to a mortal. Demeter has moved out of the realm of the immortals but cannot yet function as a mortal. The acceptance of food and drink here would not constitute a return to normal behavior for the goddess but a shift to mortal behavior - a shift she is as yet unable to make, despite her appearance and story.

However, the author of the *Hymn* has done something clever here in that a *mourning* mortal would behave just as Demeter - by refusing food and drink and the

[149] Foley (1994) p. 45. On the acceptance of seat, food, drink, and consolation as a sign of the return by a mourner to participation in the life cycle, see Nagler (1974, pp. 174-77) and Burkert (1979, pp. 43-45).

company of others. Demeter in her approach to mortals is, here, perfectly aligned with other mortals who share her psychological state. Demeter is outside the human world, not because she is in reality immortal, but also because she has chosen, as part of her mortal disguise, to align herself with mourning mortals, who are themselves outside of normal mortal life as well. This second, purposefully chosen mode of alignment, will enable her entry into the mortal sphere.

To explain this more clearly, let us look at the tri-partite theory of transitional states that was advanced by A.van Gennep in his classic work *The Rites of Passage*.[150] The tri-partite theory states that rituals that dramatize changes in the life-cycle and the calendar are characterized by 1) a separation from the old status, 2) a liminal phase, and 3) a return/incorporation into society in a new condition. The transitions are marked by symbolic behavior, much of which revolves around the body. The disfigurement and defilement of oneself at a funeral (tearing of the hair, dirtying of the clothes, etc.) would mark the transition into the liminal space. Eating and drinking at the sacrifice would indicate a return to society.[151]

In the example above provided by Foley who draws it from Burkert, Achilles returns to normal behavior[152] by accepting food and drink. This would be, in van

[150] Van Gennep's clear cut, tri-partite structure is considered to be too strict by modern evaluations. On current uses and critiques of tri-partite theory, see Faraone and Dodds (2003). However, for the basic pattern recognition used here van Gennep's formulation is still useful. See also, Endsjo's (2000) use of van Gennep to analyze spatial conceptions of eschatology.

[151] Van Gennep (1960).

[152] *Iliad* 24.628.

Gennep's model, his return into society. We see his separation in Book 18, when he learns of Patroclus' death and pours dust on his head and disfigures his face.[153] We also see him existing in the liminal space in Book 19 when he refuses food and drink.[154]

The parallels between these two scenes are discussed in M.L. Lord's 1967 article, "Withdrawal and Return: An Epic Story Pattern in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and in the Homeric Poems". Lord is arguing for patterns of withdrawal and return in epic poetry and she identifies six themes. She discusses the parallels between Achilles and Demeter within her second theme, disguise.

> The element of disguise (Theme 2) occurs in the Demeter story when the goddess for a long time disfigures or emaciates her form (94) so that no one of mortal men knows her. She is like an old woman born long ago (101). Gods appearing on earth among men regularly disguise their appearance and divinity. Demeter's disfigurement is also a sign of mourning. In her first search for her daughter she tore the headdress on her divine hair in keen sorrow and threw off her dark cloak (40- 42). For nine days she wandered over the earth and refused to taste nectar and ambrosia and to bathe (49-50). We are reminded that when Achilles hears the news of Patroclus' death, he takes the sooty dust in both hands and pours it over his head and disfigures his fine countenance, and black ashes settle on his chiton (II. 18.23-5). He also refuses food and drink (II. 19.210, 320).[155]

There is consistency between what Lord has identified as patterns of "withdrawal and return" within the narrative and the ritual structure identified by van Gennep. Or more boldly, we can see Demeter, a goddess, imitate the human ritual of

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[153]*Iliad* 18.23-25.

[154]*Iliad* 19.210, 19.320.

[155] Lord (1967) p. 244.

mourning.[156] Her imitation of this ritual, within the text, allows her to eventually emerge among the mortals and literally as part of their household. It is in fact only through this mirrored ritual that she succeeds. Her imitation (enactment) of human ritual becomes more defined as it progresses within the narrative.

Her first step, withdrawal (separation from old status) begins before she has learned what became of her daughter.

> For nine days then did the lady Deo roam the earth
> with burning torches[157] in her hands, and in her grief
> she did not once taste ambrosia and the nectar sweet to drink,
> nor did she splash her body with washing water.
>
> ἐννῆμαϱ μὲν ἔπειτα κατὰ χθόνα πότνια Δηὼ

---

[156] The only other example from Archaic Greek Poetry of a divinity mourning death in a traditional "human" way is Thetis mourning Patroclus in the *Iliad* 18.35-51, where she cries out and the nymphs beat their breasts. However, Thetis does not fast nor deface herself as Demeter in the *Hymn to Demeter*. In other instances, the god or goddess may express regret or sadness at the impending death of a beloved mortal, but does not imitate mortal mourning. For example, Zeus vocally expresses his grief at Sarpedon's fated death at *Iliad* 16. 433 but his physical reaction to the death is not any of the mortal markers of mourning (tearing the hair, fasting, beating the breast) but a divine one. Zeus, instead, "shed bloody raindrops on the earth, honoring his dear son" (16. 459-60).

[157] Demeter's torches are often linked to torches used in rites at Eleusis or as a reference to torches in other rituals. See Richardson, (1974, p. 165-167). While I argue for the close interaction of rituals and the narrative, the torches carry other meanings here in addition to any references to ritual activity. For instance, torches are often associated with both marriage and the Underworld. Hermes and Hades in particular carry torches, as do the Eumenides. In addition, the funerary aspect of torches highlights Demeter's testing of the limits between her immortal status and her daughter's new place in the Underworld in this scene.

στρωφᾶτ' αἰθομένας δαΐδας μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχουσα,
οὐδέ ποτ' ἀμβροσίης καὶ νέκταρος ἡδυπότοιο
πάσσατ' ἀκηχεμένη, οὐδὲ χρόα βάλλετο λουτροῖς
(*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 47-50)

Demeter has removed herself from the company of gods and is wandering in the sphere of mortals. She refuses the food and drink appropriate to a god, effectively fasting. She, to a certain extent, defiles her body, by neglecting to wash. Her separation is completed once she discovers Persephone's location in the Underworld. At this point, she explicitly leaves the gods and deface herself.

Then in her anger at the dark-cloud son of Kronos
she turned away from the gods' assembly and long Olympus,
and for a long time she travelled to the communities of men
and their rich farmlands, effacing her beauty

χωσαμένη δ' ἤπειτα κελαινεφέϊ Κρονίωνι
νοσφισθεῖσα θεῶν ἀγορὴν καὶ μακρὸν Ὄλυμπον
ᾤχετ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων πόλιας καὶ πίονα ἔργα
εἶδος ἀμαλδύνουσα πολὺν χρόνον·
(*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 91-94)

Demeter is at this point occupying a liminal position outside of society (either society, that of gods or mortals). She is then, through ritual action literally and figuratively incorporated into human society in a new position. In her retreat from the gods she puts on a mortal body - one that is most deficient from the blessings that her immortal "body" had.

The motif is doubled within the *Hymn* as Demeter initially withdraws from the gods in a way that places her outside the mortal world. Next, she (re)enters the mortal world by eating and becoming part of the household. Finally, after becoming enraged at Metaneira, she definitively withdraws from both worlds by retreating into

the temple. Demeter's withdrawal into the temple moves her doubly away from divinity, as she has withdrawn from both mortal and immortal society. The possibility of this final retreat, effectively apart from both mortals and immortals, makes her initial escape through incorporation into the mortal world and her assumption of a deficient body more significant.

ii. Ritual Elements allowing Demeter to Enter the Mortal Sphere

The ritual elements which occur at the point in the narrative where Demeter is established as part of the household of Metaneira (192-205) have been discussed, at length, as *aitia* for the elements of ritual found at Eleusis or in mystery cults in general.[158] Alternatively, they have been used to link the *Hymn* to the Eleusinian Mysteries and reconstruct what may have occurred there. The veil, the silence followed eventually by shameful language (*aischrologia*),[159] the ram's fleece,[160] the

[158] See Richardson (1974) for a general discussion of the *Hymn's* relation to the Eleusinian Mysteries, esp. pp. 12-30; Burkert (1985, pp. 285-290); and Parker (1991). For the opposite argument, see Clinton (1992, esp. pp. 28-37 and pp. 96-99). Clinton argues that the *Hymn* should not be associated too closely with the rites at Eleusis and associates the *Hymn* more closely with the Thesmophoria.

[159] Callimachus fr. 21.8-10 Pf., which, in spite of an uncertain text, seems quite securely to connect *aischrologia* with fasting at Demeter's festival. For ritual *aischrologia* and the festivals of Demeter, see Fluck (1931, pp. 11-33).

[160]The fleece is represented on the Lovatelli urn (AF Pl. 7.2) and on the Torre Nova sarcophagus (AF Pl. 7.1), in both instances under the initiate's feet, not on a stool. Burkert (1985) links these images with that of Herakles sitting on the fleece during an "initiation" p. 285.

fasting, the abstention from wine, and the drinking of the *kykeon*[161] are all elements from this scene which have been linked to the mysteries.

> But Demeter, bringer of resplendent gifts in season,
> did not want to be seated on the gleaming couch,
> but stood in silence, her lovely eyes downcast,
> until dutiful Iambe set a jointed stool for her
> and laid a shining white fleece over it.
> There she sat, holding her veil before her face,
> and for a long time she remained there on the seat in silent sorrow.
> She greeted no one with word or movement,
> but sat there unsmiling, tasting neither food nor drink,
> pining for her deep-girt daughter,
> until at last dutiful Iambe with ribaldry and
> many a jest diverted the holy lady so that
> she smiled and laughed and became benevolent --
> Iambe who ever since has found favor with her moods.
>
> ἀλλ᾽ οὐ Δημήτηρ ὡρηφόρος ἀγλαόδωρος
> ἤθελεν ἑδριάασθαι ἐπὶ κλισμοῖο φαεινοῦ,
> ἀλλ᾽ ἀκέουσα ἔμιμνε κατ᾽ ὄμματα καλὰ βαλοῦσα,
> πρίν γ᾽ ὅτε δή οἱ ἔθηκεν Ἰάμβη κέδν᾽ εἰδυῖα
> πηκτὸν ἕδος, καθύπερθε δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἀργύφεον βάλε κῶας.
> ἔνθα καθεζομένη προκατέσχετο χερσὶ καλύπτρην·
> δηρὸν δ᾽ ἄφθογγος τετιημένη ἧστ᾽ ἐπὶ δίφρου,
> οὐδέ τιν᾽ οὔτ᾽ ἔπεϊ προσπτύσσετο οὔτε τι ἔργῳ,
> ἀλλ᾽ ἀγέλαστος ἄπαστος ἐδητύος ἠδὲ ποτῆτος
> ἧστο πόθῳ μινύθουσα βαθυζώνοιο θυγατρός,
> πρίν γ᾽ ὅτε δὴ χλεύης μιν Ἰάμβη κέδν᾽ εἰδυῖα
> πολλὰ παρασκώπτουσ᾽ ἐτρέψατο πότνιαν ἁγνὴν
> μειδῆσαι γελάσαι τε καὶ ἵλαον σχεῖν θυμόν·
> ἣ δή οἱ καὶ ἔπειτα μεθύστερον εὔαδεν ὀργαῖς.
>
> (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 192-205)

It is my argument that it is only through this correlation between ritual elements and the narrative events that any successful communication within the narrative becomes possible. Demeter, because at this point the text is mirroring ritual,

[161]On the *kykeon*, see Delatte (1955, pp. 23-40); Richardson, (1974, Appendix IV pp. 344-48), and Rosen (1987). The kykeon consisted fundamentally of barley-meal mixed with a liquid.

can assume a position in the household. She can communicate with Metaneira to a mutually agreed upon goal (the nursing of Demophon). Within the *Hymns* a god can effectively communicate with mortals (or be communicated with) during moments that refer to ritual. The ritual that is referred to does not need to correlate to any actual ritual outside the text. It is not the "real" ritual outside of the text that allows communication to succeed (this would be preposterous). Instead, it is the representation of ritual as the path to successful communication that is important. As such, the presence of any reference to ritual is enough, within the text, to allow communication to succeed while maintaining the message.

It is only here in the *Hymn to Demeter* that this partially-successful communication occurs.[162] This is because of the *Hymn's* close association to the Eleusinian Mysteries. The *Hymn* is here mirroring the Lesser and Greater Mysteries by narrating two stages of communication. The *Hymn*, I argue, reflects the experience of the initiate within its narrative. I argue this both based upon the correlation between the events described in the *Hymn* to what we know of the elements leading up to and during the Mysteries and, more importantly, based upon the way understanding and communication are represented within both the Mysteries and the *Hymn* (and the *Hymns* as a genre). The *Hymn* not only reflects the steps of the initiate (purification, fasting, *aischrologia,* etc.) but also the movement of the initiate from ignorance to revelation. This movement from ignorance to revelation is

[162] For the partially-successful communication in the *Hymn to Aphrodite* see below. This communication is not based upon reference to ritual but reflections of the nature of the goddess.

the same movement reflected by each of the *Hymns* in their descriptions of types of communication from failed communication based upon the body to successful communication based upon ritual. I will address this aspect of the *Hymn* below.

That the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* was thought to reflect the acts and feelings of the initiates has been argued by Parker,[163] who claims an active and intentional creation of this version of the myth of Demeter and Persephone from two prior types. The first by the inheritor of an epic tradition, a heroic poet, "accustomed to narrate the divine drama of the rape and recovery without any significant interaction between gods and men, any founding of cults, at all."[164] The second by what Parker terms an "Eumolpid," the mouthpiece of local Eleusinian tradition who wrote in prose and was not at all concerned with "telling a good story."[165] According to Parker, the task of the reader of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* is to identify which of these two is influencing the author at any given point. Parker's stated purpose is to react again Kevin Clinton's claims, based largely on inaccuracies or inconsistencies between the *Hymn* and evidence for the rites, that the *Hymn* and the rites should not to be too closely linked.[166] For my purposes, it is not about when the narrator is reflecting epic or when he is reflecting ritual, but what the combination of these two

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[163] Parker (1991). See also, Richardson (1974) and Burkert (1985) note 13 above.

[164] Parker (1991) p. 5. On the near eastern parallels see Richardson, (1974, pp. 258-9), and Burkert (1979, ch. 6). Conversely, Clay (1989) sees both epic and local elements as part of the *Hymns'* Pan-Hellenic program.

[165] Parker (1991) p. 5.

[166] Clinton (1993) p. 112. See Parker (1991) pp. 15-16 n. 22.

elements creates. Myth and ritual together, as discussed in Chapter One, can say more than either separately. While I don't deny that the text of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* relates to the Eleusinian Mysteries, and as such, can be used to shed light on the ritual, what I am interested in is how the "mythic" portions of the text use references to ritual elements and actions to enable successful communication between the characters, the mortals and the anthropomorphic gods.

The Mysteries themselves, in later times, were divided into several stages. It is unclear how many stages there were at any given point but, following Richardson, "at least a twofold division, into mu/hsij and e)poptei/a, seems likely to be an older feature."[167] The preliminary stages are often referred to as the Lesser Mysteries, which was originally a separate local Athenian cult.

The Lesser Mysteries are linked to purification which initiates must undergo before the Greater Mysteries. According to myth Herakles had to undergo purification for his murder of the Centaurs before initiation in the Mysteries at Eleusis.[168] In particular the veil, the ram's fleece, and the torches are linked to Herakles through art.[169] Herakles' initiation is represented as granting him the ability to survive the Underworld.[170] Conversely, in a papyrus fragment in Milan published

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[167] Richardson (1974) p. 21.

[168] Diodorus Siculus IV, 25.

[169] For the veil and torch, see Mylonas (1961, Figs. 83, 84). For the ram's-fleece, see Burkert, (1985, n. 15 above).

[170] Euripides, *Hercules Furens* 610-13.

by Vogliano, Herakles claims a greater knowledge of the afterlife and relationship to Persephone than that which the Mysteries can grant, due to already having been to the Underworld and back.[171] These two versions are discussed further below.

Each of the items from the passage above (192-205), the veil, the silence followed eventually by shameful language (*aischrologia*), the ram's fleece, the fasting, the abstention from wine, and the drinking of the *kykeon*, it has been argued, occur as part of the Mysteries, either in the initial stages or later during the Greater Mysteries.

The culmination of the elements that scholars have identified, here, as linked to the Mysteries is when Iambe tells dirty jokes, which is often assumed to be the model for the *aischrologia*. Interestingly enough, successful communication becomes possibly only through the mediation of a low form of language, spoken by a low-status character. Iambe as a foreign slave woman, who like Demeter (Demeter at this point in the story), occupies a liminal position. It is Iambe[172] who properly empathizes and reaches Demeter. Her mediation allows Demeter to "join" the mortals (to receive food, drink and a seat).

What is most interesting about this scene is the mirroring between the slave-master relationship/communication and the divine-human communication, as

[171] Vogliano (1937) pp. 175-176.

[172] On Iambe and the *Hymn to Demeter*, see O'Higgins (2003) Chapter Two. On the connection between Iambe and iambic invective, see West, (1974, pp. 22-25). On the connection between iambic invective and the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, see Rosen (1987). For the ancient evidence linking the *iambos* with the Iambe-Demeter story, see Fluck, (1931, pp. 24-25).

discussed in my project. Successful communication between mortals and immortals within the *Hymn* requires ritual reference, often to action. When the communication is from the god or goddess to the mortals it establishes a new ritual site or rites. Communication here from Iambe to Demeter requires both a ritual form of speech (*aischrologia*) and in later accounts "ritual" action. Iambe has a counterpart in other versions of the myth called Baubo. In addition to *aischrologia*, Baubo performs ritual actions as well. Baubo paints her belly and performs indecent exposure.[173]

Therefore, as will be discussed below, Demeter's communication to the mortals at the end of the *Hymn* is represented as successful because it establishes ritual (when she issues instructions regarding the Mysteries). Iambe's communication is also represented as successful and also institutes new ritual practice. Thus, the *Hymns* present ritual as being established specifically to enable communication.

The communication at this point in the text is successful in that it allows Demeter to finally eat, drink, and move into the household as Demophon's nurse. It *can* be successful because the narrative contains references to ritual, in the character and actions of Iambe. However, the characters at this point revert to communication based on the body as Demeter continues to represent herself as a mortal to Metaneira, both in her behavior and her promises.[174] This is discussed further below.

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[173] For a discussion of Baubo see O'Higgins, (2003, pp. 51-53).

[174] The two stages of communication represented in the *Hymn*, with the first leading up to the second, reflect the two stages of the Mysteries. As such, this first stage necessarily must be lesser than the second, true, initiation (revelation).

iii. Persephone's Mortal Limitation

The second way Demeter's assumption of a limited body resonates within the text is in her response to the "mortal limitation" placed on her daughter Persephone by her location in the Underworld. Demeter's inability to retrieve her daughter, leaving her effectively childless, is mirrored in the mortal form she assumes. In addition, her inability to replace Persephone in a normal way[175] (childbearing) is mirrored in the barren body she presents to the mortals. Finally her attempt to remove Demophon's mortality can be seen as an attempt to test and break the boundary between mortal and immortal that now separates her from her daughter. To appreciate all of this fully, first it is necessary to explore the reality of the separation imposed by Persephone's removal to the Underworld, despite her own and her mother's immortality.

Persephone is limited by the Underworld, in the same way that a mortal would be. She cannot return, nor can any of the living (nor can any of the immortals, with a few exceptions) reach her. She is in some sense dead.

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[175] Why *can't* Demeter just replace her daughter? Why not invite Zeus or Poseidon over for the afternoon? Or is it rather that she *chooses* not to try to replace Persephone in a normal way? One answer is that cult and traditional myth are restraining the narrative here. Cult and traditional myth say that Demeter is a *mater dolorosa* and so the narrative has to accommodate that. However, the attempt to substitute a child points to the humanity and *pathos* of this moment. It is Demeter's very human struggle with the irrevocable separation that death brings to mortals that has brought her among mortals in the narrative.

Even before the consumption of the pomegranate seeds, the boundary that the Underworld represents, even to a god or goddess is recognized.

> As long as the goddess could still see the earth
> and the starry sky and the strong-flowing sea full of fish
> and the light of the sun, and so long as she expected
> to see her dear mother again and the families of immortal gods,
> so long, despite her distress, her great mind had the comfort of hope.
>
> ὄφρα μὲν οὖν γαῖάν τε καὶ οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα
> λεῦσσε θεὰ καὶ πόντον ἀγάρροον ἰχθυόεντα
> αὐγάς τ' ἠελίου, ἔτι δ' ἤλπετο μητέρα κεδνὴν
> ὄψεσθαι καὶ φῦλα θεῶν αἰειγενετάων,
> τόφρα οἱ ἐλπὶς ἔθελγε μέγαν νόον ἀχνυμένης περ·
> (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 33-37)

Persephone is abducted from the field, but retains hope[176] until she loses sight of the earth and sky and sea. Demeter hears her, but cannot find her. The separation between mortal and immortal is marked by Demeter's inability to perceive her daughter across this boundary. By crossing into the Underworld and because she herself cannot effect a return, Persephone is limited in the ways that a mortal is limited. Persephone is of course not "dead," but she is forced to conform to the very limit that defines mortals as distinct from immortals, death. Inversely, and even more interestingly, Demeter, because she lacks all such limits, not only cannot cross the boundary but cannot even perceive it and what is beyond it. That is, she cannot

[176] Persephone's hope (ἤλπετο) is like mortals' hope from the myth of Pandora's jar, c.f. Hesiod's *Works and Days*. One argument regarding the myth is that since hope remained in the jar, mortals do not have it. Mortals know they are doomed to die and cannot hope to escape that fate. Persephone, here, has hope until she enters the Underworld. At that point, she looses it and is like any mortal. See Clay (2003).

experience a boundary that does not exist for her, an immortal, and as we see from her earlier lack of knowledge about Persephone's location, she cannot see beyond this boundary. In essence the boundary between life and death cannot exist for her since she herself does not and can not have a mortal body.

The impermeability of this boundary to the gods is effectively argued by Jean Rudhardt in his article "A propos de l'hymne homérique à Déméter." Rudhardt claims, "Unless we accept this impermeability, the myth of Demeter, Hades, and Persephone is incomprehensible. . . .If Demeter, if Persephone could cross the infernal barrier, marriage with Hades, like other divine marriages, would not cause the crisis narrated in the Eleusinian hymn."[177]

The efficacy of the boundary is linked to ideas of the body. However, there is a contradiction here in terms of the body. A mortal who has died is imagined to have left his or her body behind along with all the needs and privileges of that body. The dead, for the most part, do not eat or sleep or touch. Odysseus' attempt to embrace his mother is an excellent example of the lack of body attributed to a dead mortal.[178] On the other hand, Persephone in the Underworld is imagined to be embodied and the reason for her irrevocable link to the Underworld is bodily - food. It is the consumption of the pomegranate seeds that commits her in some permanent way to a life in the Underworld. The consumption of *mortal food*, in contrast to nectar and ambrosia, commits her to a body that is like a mortal body, in that it is confined by

[177] Rudhardt (1978) p. 203.

[178] *Odyssey*, 11.205-214.

the some of the same limits as mortal bodies when she is in the Underworld. As seen in Chapters One, Two, and Three, it is the very ability to *violate* limits that creates the supernatural, the divine. Persephone, because she is forced to conform to a body that is limited, while it is in the Underworld, is essentially forced to occupy a "mortal" body. This does not mean that Persephone has all of the limits of a body, but that she has one irrevocable and important limitation, death. As shown in Chapter Two, it is the *violation* of the body by immortality that creates the supernatural concept god for the anthropomorphic Greek gods. Since Persephone lacks this all important *violation* while in the Underworld she is like a mortal.

Demeter, despite being unable to either cross or perceive the boundary over which her daughter has disappeared, does learn of Persephone's fate, from Helios and Hekate.[179] She immediately ceases to search, knowing she cannot reach her daughter and confirming the impermeability of this boundary.

Demeter's next action in the narrative is the assumption of the mortal body, that of the old woman, as discussed above. Once she has achieved a workable mortal appearance (remember, requiring the appearance, background story and the mediation of ritual action) she takes on a function within the mortal sphere. She becomes the nurse to the child Demophon.

Demeter's actions when nursing Demophon are not those of the mortal role or body she has assumed. She immediately marks her intention to be a nurse who is

[179]There is no attested cult associating Hekate with Eleusis. For iconography, see Schwarz (1987, p. 253, index s.v. Hekate).

beyond normal expectations in her reply to Metaneira's charge of caring for Demophon.

> As for your boy, I will gladly take him over, as you request.
> I will rear him, and I do not anticipate that any supernatural
> visitation or cutter of roots will harm him through any negligence by his
> nurse.
> For I know a powerful counter-cut to beat the herb-cutter,
> and I know a good inhibitor of baneful visitation.
>
> θρέψω, κοὔ μιν ἔολπα κακοφραδίῃσι τιθήνης
> οὔτ' ἄρ' ἐπηλυσίη δηλήσεται οὔθ' ὑποτάμνον·
> οἶδα γὰρ ἀντίτομον μέγα φέρτερον ὑλοτόμοιο,
> οἶδα δ' ἐπηλυσίης πολυπήμονος ἐσθλὸν ἐρυσμόν.
> (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 227-230)

Demeter's claim to special knowledge is phrased as her having an access to special ritual techniques, thus keeping her knowledge in the realm of mortals, as opposed to the divine. This second story Demeter tells, unlike the first about her capture and escape, is one of how she is not limited by the mortal body but can access knowledge beyond it. However, Demeter's comments to Metaneira portray her powers in terms that are both understandable and more importantly accessible to mortals. After all, the potential threat to Demophon here is an "herb-cutter" – presumably a mortal. Demeter only claims to be able to counter this threat. Thus, while Demeter here claims some of the actual powers that she herself has, she does not go beyond mortal skills (yet). As an old woman, Demeter could reasonably be expected to have access to this sort of special knowledge.

If in fact had Demophon merely grown up without any curses or sicknesses, Demeter might have held true to her story and her appearance. But what Demeter advertises as her more-than-meets-the-eye abilities, to ward off harmful curses or

visitations, is not at all what she does only a few lines later. She advertises things that any mortal wise woman can do, but then secretly exceeds them.

> So she proceeded to rear in the mansion
> wise Keleos' resplendent son Demophon,
> whom fair-girt Metaneira had borne, and
> he grew like a divine being, though he ate
> no food and sucked no <mother's milk.
> For by day fair-garlanded> Demeter would
> anoint him with ambrosia, as if he were the
> son of a god, breathing her sweet breath over him
> as she held him in her bosom,
> while each night she would hide him
> away in the burning fire, like a brand,
> without his dear parents' knowledge.
> To them it was a great wonder how precociously
> he flourished; he was like the gods to behold.
>
> ὣς ἡ μὲν Κελεοῖο δαΐφρονος ἀγλαὸν υἱὸν
> Δημοφόωνθ', ὃν ἔτικτεν ἐϋζωνος Μετάνειρα,
> ἔτρεφεν ἐν μεγάροις· ὁ δ' ἀέξετο δαίμονι ἶσος
> οὔτ' οὖν σῖτον ἔδων, οὐ θησάμενος <γάλα μητρὸς>
> … Δημήτηρ
> χρίεσκ' ἀμβροσίῃ ὡς εἰ θεοῦ ἐκγεγαῶτα,
> ἡδὺ καταπνείουσα καὶ ἐν κόλποισιν ἔχουσα·
> νύκτας δὲ κρύπτεσκε πυρὸς μένει ἠΰτε δαλὸν
> λάθρα φίλων γονέων· τοῖς δὲ μέγα θαῦμ' ἐτέτυκτο
> ὡς προθαλὴς τελέθεσκε, θεοῖσι δὲ ἄντα ἐῴκει.
> (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 233-241)

Demeter's rearing of Demophon ignores the limitations placed upon her by her assumption of a mortal body and background. She gives Demophon ambrosia and nectar, items only available to gods and only intended for gods. In addition to limiting herself, Demeter ignores the limits of Demophon's own body.[180] No mortal body ought to be able to withstand the nightly fire that was Demophon's cradle.

[180] For the methods of gods attempting to make mortals immortal, see Sissa and Detienne (1989, pp. 79-80).

The result of this violation of bodily limits, both actual and conceptual, is a break-down in communication between the goddess and the mortals among whom she is living. Metaneira spies upon and interrupts Demeter's nightly ritual of burning away Demophon's mortality. The scene of Metaneira's interruption displays the breakdown in communication between the goddess and the mortal woman once the body upon which knowledge and understanding had been based has been revealed as false.

Metaneira cannot perceive or understand that Demeter is not limited by the body that she (Metaneira) perceives Demeter to inhabit. Because of this inability to perceive the goddess as she really is (or is not) Metaneira fails to understand what could be happening to her son. She can only perceive the situation before her in terms of what happens to mortal bodies.

> Indeed she would have made him ageless and deathless,
> if in her folly fair-girt Metaneira had not waited for the
> nighttime and spied from her fragrant chamber:
> she shrieked and clapped her two thighs in alarm for her son,
> for she was greatly misled,
> and she addressed him with winged words of lament:
> "Demophon my child, the visitor is hiding you away
> in the blazing fire, causing me groaning and grief."
>
> καί κέν μιν ποίησεν ἀγήρων τ' ἀθάνατόν τε
> εἰ μὴ ἄρ' ἀφραδίῃσιν ἐϋζωνος Μετάνειρα
> νύκτ' ἐπιτηρήσασα θυώδεος ἐκ θαλάμοιο
> σκέψατο· κώκυσεν δὲ καὶ ἄμφω πλήξατο μηρὼ
> δείσασ' ᾧ περὶ παιδὶ καὶ ἀάσθη μέγα θυμῷ,
> καί ῥ' ὀλοφυρομένη ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα·
> Τέκνον Δημοφόων ξείνη σε πυρὶ ἔνι πολλῷ
> κρύπτει, ἐμοὶ δὲ γόον καὶ κήδεα λυγρὰ τίθησιν.
> (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 242-249)

Metaneira is designated as foolish here in the text (ἀφραδίῃσιν), but her folly is upon close examination perfectly understandable. Her human and maternal reaction to the situation is in fact more understandable to the audience than Demeter's reaction of rage, to which I will return below.

Metaneira, in line 246 is called misled (ἀάσθη). In what way was she misled, one might ask of the poem? The child entrusted to Demeter after all is flourishing and, as discussed above, Demeter is doing all she had promised to do, to paraphrase: "to take him over and rear him and keep curses from him".

The answer, of course, is that she was misled by Demeter's form and story, misled into assuming that her visitor did in fact inhabit the body in which she appeared was in fact limited by it.

The breakdown in communication at this point is made explicit in the text. Demeter has done something that violates acceptable practice for anyone subject to a body and mortality. And Metaneira, once she has realized that she was mislead, does not address the goddess as she would a fellow mortal again. Even in her agitation, Metaneira only speaks to her son, not to Demeter ("Demophon my child, the visitor is hiding you away in the blazing fire, causing me groaning and grief," 248-249). However, Demeter has not yet had her full epiphany and is still present, in human form, in the room. Metaneira demonstrates here the inability to communicate with the goddess, by any mortal means, once the common bond of the body has been lost. Demeter, however, does hear Metaneira and does speak to her.

> So she [Metaneira] lamented; and the goddess heard her.

Angry with her, fair-garlanded Demeter took her
dear son, whom she had borne beyond expectation in the mansion,
in her immortal arms and laid him down away from her on the ground,
removing him out of the fire in her heart's great wrath,
and at the same time she spoke to fair-girt Metaneira:
"Ignorant humans and witless to recognize
a dispensation of coming good or ill!

Ὣς φάτ' ὀδυρομένη· τῆς δ' ἄϊε δῖα θεάων.
τῇ δὲ χολωσαμένη καλλιστέφανος Δημήτηρ
παῖδα φίλον, τὸν ἄελπτον ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἔτικτε,
χείρεσσ' ἀθανάτῃσιν ἀπὸ ἕο θῆκε πέδον δὲ
ἐξανελοῦσα πυρὸς θυμῷ κοτέσασα μάλ' αἰνῶς,
καί ῥ' ἄμυδις προσέειπεν ἐϋζωνον Μετάνειραν·
Νήϊδες ἄνθρωποι καὶ ἀφράδμονες οὔτ' ἀγαθοῖο
αἶσαν ἐπερχομένου προγνώμεναι οὔτε κακοῖο·
(*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 250-257)

While Demeter speaks here, it is no longer the type of address used between two mortals. Demeter is addressing Metaneira as a goddess speaking to a mortal. The opening of her speech is the cliché criticizing mortal ignorance, marking this transition. As Richardson notes, "The derogatory address to mankind by a deity or prophet was traditional in both Greek and Jewish literature."[181] In addition, Richardson notes, following Schwabl, the use of the plural in lines 256-257 serves "to drive home the contrast between mortal and god."[182]

B. Communication Based on Ritual

[181] For example, Hesiod's *Theogony* 26-28 and *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 532-537. See Richardson (1974, p. 243), for an exhaustive list.

[182] Richardson (1974) p. 244, following Schwabl (1970) p. 27.

Demeter's address here to Metaneira is the first example in this *Hymn* of what will be completely successful communication. The speech consists of instructions from the goddess to the mortal(s) and ends with her full epiphany. The ritual elements present in this scene are not as overt as those discussed above when Demeter to some extent successfully communicated with Metaneira regarding the rearing of Demophon, through the intermediary of Iambe's ritual speech and action. However, acts being performed upon Demophon, within the text, refer to ritual and therefore allow for successful communication.

The acts performed upon Demophon do not need to correlate to any external ritual. It is sufficient that Demeter is "anointing him with ambrosia" (237), "breathing on him" (238), and "placing him in fire at night" (239-240), repeatedly.[183] Especially the repetition and formalized nature of these actions (not to mention the fact that it is Demeter performing them) is sufficient to refer to ritual.

In addition, there are ties drawn between this scene and possible "real" ritual. The *amphidromia* was a custom in which those associated with a birth would purify their hands and then run around the hearth.[184] This was, following Plato (*Theaet*. 160e), an adoption ritual. Thus, it would be appropriate for Demeter to whom Demophon is a sort of surrogate child in place of Persephone (see above) to perform this ritual. While the intent of the placement of Demophon in the fire, within the

[183] See Richardson, (1974, pp. 237-239), for a list of parallel scenes of anointing, breathing upon, and placing in fire to achieve immortality.

[184] See Richardson (1974) pp. 231-232.

narrative, is to immortalize him, there is not problem with the specifics of the method also referencing the *Amphidromia*.

There is, also, some evidence that as part of the preliminary purification rituals there was a ritual involving a child and the hearth. This child was selected from among the leading families of Athens. Demophon has also been linked to the moment of revelation at the climax of the Mysteries inside the Telesterion, since this moment is associated with fire (in contrast to darkness) by ancient authors.[185] Regardless of the relation to any external "real" ritual, Demeter's actions in anointing Demophon, breathing upon him, and placing him in the fire refer to ritual action and as such the following instructions to the mortals will be successful.

Demeter's instructions and full epiphany are broken into two scenes. First she declares her status as a goddess and gives instructions for both the Balletys and the creation of a temple at Eleusis (followed by her physical epiphany as discussed in Chapter Three). Then, after having withdrawn to this temple, caused the famine, and forced the return of Persephone, she gives instructions on the rites to be performed there.

The speech in which Demeter's epiphany occurs contains two "ritual moments." First, Demeter describes honors that Demophon will receive instead of immortality and, then, she gives instructions for her temple at Eleusis.

> I would have made your dear son deathless and ageless for ever,
> and granted him unfading privilege;
> but now there is no way he can avoid death and mortality.
> Yet a privilege unfading shall always be his,

[185] See Richardson (1974) p. 233. See also, Mommsen (1898) and Kerényi (1962) p. 80.

because he came onto my lap and slept in my arms:
in his honor, at the due season of the revolving years,
the sons of the Eleusinians shall evermore
make battle and affray among themselves.

ἀθάνατόν κέν τοι καὶ ἀγήραον ἤματα πάντα
παῖδα φίλον ποίησα καὶ ἄφθιτον ὤπασα τιμήν·
νῦν δ' οὐκ ἔσθ' ὥς κεν θάνατον καὶ κῆρας ἀλύξαι.
τιμὴ δ' ἄφθιτος αἰὲν ἐπέσσεται οὕνεκα γούνων
ἡμετέρων ἐπέβη καὶ ἐν ἀγκοίνῃσιν ἴαυσεν.
ὥρῃσιν δ' ἄρα τῷ γε περιπλομένων ἐνιαυτῶν
παῖδες Ἐλευσινίων πόλεμον καὶ φύλοπιν αἰνὴν
αἰὲν ἐν ἀλλήλοισι συνάξουσ' ἤματα πάντα.
(*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 260-267)

Demophon's honors likely refer to a ritual mock battle, the Balletys. The evidence for the ritual is from Hesychius' Lexicon and from Athenaeus.[186] The ceremony involved stone-throwing or some other form of fighting and can be linked, among other interpretations, to *aichrologia*.[187] Again, whether these honors can be linked to the specific ritual, the Balletys, or not, it is the fact that they refer to ritual that allows for the communication to be successful at this point.

Demeter next commands that a temple be built for her in Eleusis.

For I am Demeter the honored one,
who is the greatest boon and joy to immortals and mortals.
Now, let the whole people build me a great temple with an altar below it,

[186] Hsch. Balletys: An Athenian festival, held for Demophon son of Keleos. (Βαλλητύς· ἑορτὴ Ἀθήνησιν, ἐπὶ Δημοφῶντι τῷ Κελεοῦ ἀγομένη); Ath. 406d "For I know there is some festival held at Eleusis and it is called the Ballytys." ( Ἐλευσῖνι γὰρ τῇ ἐμῇ οἶδά τινα πανήγυριν ἀγομένην καὶ καλουμένην Βαλλητύν).

[187] For further examples of this type of ceremony and discussion of the Balletys see Richardson, (1971, pp. 246-247).

under the citadel's sheer wall,
above Kallichoron, where the hill juts out.
As to the rites, I myself will instruct you on how in future
you can propitiate me with holy performance."
With these words the goddess changed her form…

εἰμὶ δὲ Δημήτηρ τιμάοχος, ἥ τε μέγιστον
ἀθανάτοις θνητοῖσί τ' ὄνεαρ καὶ χάρμα τέτυκται.
ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι νηόν τε μέγαν καὶ βωμὸν ὑπ' αὐτῷ
τευχόντων πᾶς δῆμος ὑπαὶ πόλιν αἰπύ τε τεῖχος
Καλλιχόρου καθύπερθεν ἐπὶ προὔχοντι κολωνῷ·
ὄργια δ' αὐτὴ ἐγὼν ὑποθήσομαι ὡς ἂν ἔπειτα
εὐαγέως ἕρδοντες ἐμὸν νόον ἱλάσκοισθε.
Ὣς εἰποῦσα θεὰ μέγεθος καὶ εἶδος ἄμειψε
(*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 268-275)

The Eleusinians do in fact build the temple at this point in the text. This is the first half of the successful completion of Demeter's instructions and will lead (eventually) to Demeter emerging from this temple to reveal the Mysteries (and, likewise, will lead to the second half of successful communication, participation in the Mysteries, as instructed by Demeter).

Demeter's withdrawal into this temple reverses the sequence of events in epiphanies as discussed by Peter Smith – a withdrawal into a temple, a re-emergence accompanied by divine accoutrements, and a divine departure (or arrival). As Smith notes, "the sequence of events in her story led to her epiphany anticipating her retreat, for her temple did not exist until her self-revelation and the orders she gave for it to be built."[188]

Like the necessary reversal of the sequence in Demeter's epiphany, Demeter's final instructions regarding the Eleusinian rites must be delayed until after

[188] Smith (1981) pp. 114-115 n. 40.

Persephone's return has been effected. Then Demeter emerges from her temple at Eleusis and gives the Mysteries to the rulers.

> She [Demeter] went to the lawgiver kings,
> Triptolemos and horse-goading Diocles,
> strong Eumolpos and Keleos leader of hosts,
> and taught them the sacred service, and showed the beautiful mysteries
> to Triptolemos, Polyxenos, and also Diocles –
> the solemn mysteries which one cannot depart from or enquire about
> or broadcast, for great awe of the gods restrains us from speaking.
> Blessed is he of men on earth who has beheld them,
> whereas he that is uninitiated in the rites, or he that has had no part in them,
> never enjoys a similar lot down in the musty dark when he is dead.
> After the goddess had instructed them in everything, she and Persephone
> went to Olympus to join the congregation of the other gods.

> ἡ δὲ κιοῦσα θεμιστοπόλοις βασιλεῦσι
> δ[εῖξε,] Τριπτολέμῳ τε Διοκλεῖ τε πληξίππῳ,
> Εὐμόλπου τε βίῃ Κελεῷ θ' ἡγήτορι λαῶν,
> δρησμοσύνην θ' ἱερῶν καὶ ἐπέφραδεν ὄργια πᾶσι,
> Τριπτολέμῳ τε Πολυξείνῳ τ', ἐπὶ τοῖς δὲ Διοκλεῖ,
> σεμνά, τά τ' οὔ πως ἔστι παρεξ[ίμ]εν [οὔτε πυθέσθαι,]
> οὔτ' ἀχέειν· μέγα γάρ τι θεῶν σέβας ἰσχάνει αὐδήν.
> ὄλβιος ὃς τάδ' ὄπωπεν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων·
> ὃς δ' ἀτελὴς ἱερῶν, ὅς τ' ἄμμορος, οὔ ποθ' ὁμοίων
> αἶσαν ἔχει φθίμενός περ ὑπὸ ζόφῳ εὐρώεντι.
> Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ πάνθ' ὑπεθήκατο δῖα θεάων,
> βάν ῥ' ἴμεν Οὔλυμπον δὲ θεῶν μεθ' ὁμήγυριν ἄλλων.
> (*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 473-484)

What were the Mysteries? As already discussed, they were divided into the Greater and Lesser Mysteries. It was forbidden to reveal what occurred during the Mysteries. The narrator of the *Hymn* tells us "great awe of the gods restrains us from speaking." Secrecy was one of the most essential features of the Mysteries. Richardson comments, "The words μυστή/ρια, μυστης, μυεῖν, (etc. were

connected with μύω ('to close', of one's eyes, mouth, etc.)).[189] Attempts have been made to reconstruct what actually occurred during the rites with theories ranging from a reenactment of all or parts of the *Hymn* to a simple declaration by the priest coupled with the showing of sacred objects.[190]

For my argument, it is the points where the *Hymn* reflects (or may reflect) ritual that matter. The visual aspect, the "showing of sacred objects," which is the focus of many commentators interpretations (including Richardson) will be, in my model, less important than the spoken aspect. Richardson identifies three segments to the ritual, "τά δρώμενα (cf. δρησμοσύνην, ὄργια), i.e. certain ritual actions, τά δεικνυμενα (cf. δ[εῖξε,], ἐπέφραδεν), sacred objects which were shown, and τά λεγόμενα, probably brief ritual sayings."[191]

The initiate who had completed the Mysteries gained, in general, a closer relationship with the goddesses.

> Blessed is he of men on earth who has seen them,
> whereas he that is uninitiated in the rites, or he that has had no part in them,

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[189] Richardson (1974) p. 304. On the secrecy of the Mysteries see Casel (1991) ch. 1.

[190] Isocrates suggests in his *Panegyricus* (28) that Demeter's visit to Eleusis was narrated during the ritual. Parker sees the possibility for a ritual "seeking of Persephone" in the text, (1991, p. 7), in this he follows Christian sources esp. Clement *Protreptikos* 2.12.2, see Deubner, (1966, p. 84 n.8). See also, Foucart (1914) p. 457, Farnell (1977) vol. 3 p. 173, Wehrli (1934) p. 85, Mylonas (1961) p. 261, and Nilsson (1941) p. 662. For discussion of why a full scale reenactment is unlikely, see Richardson (1974) p. 25.

[191] Richardson (1974) p. 302. For τά λεγόμενα, see Mylonas (1961) p. 261.

never enjoys a similar lot down in the musty dark when he is dead.

ὄλβιος ὃς τάδ' ὄπωπεν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων·
ὃς δ' ἀτελὴς ἱερῶν, ὅς τ' ἄμμορος, οὔ ποθ' ὁμοίων
αἶσαν ἔχει φθίμενός περ ὑπὸ ζόφῳ εὐρώεντι.
(*Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 480-482)

The initiate who has *seen* the Mysteries is "blessed" even while alive. The implication of this passage is that the initiate gained more than a better afterlife through the Mysteries, but also a better life while alive. The *Hymn* does not state how or what sorts of benefits the initiate would experience. However, it can be assumed that what the initiate gained through the initiation was a closer relationship with the goddesses, Persephone and Demeter. A relationship which can enable understanding and successful communication since it is based on ritual. Thus, for initiates, the ritual at Eleusis creates a situation which is exactly opposite to that experienced by the mortals in the *Hymn*. The mortals in the *Hymn* must rely on their visual perception of the goddess even through it is false. Metaneira and her daughters perceive Demeter as an old woman despite her partial epiphany upon entering the house.

As demonstrated above, communication after Demeter's partial epiphany and inclusion in the household of Metaneira, was ultimately unsuccessful and led to the confrontation over Demophon. Metaneira could not understand Demeter's actions regarding Demophon. Likewise, Demeter could not understand Metaneira's reaction when she discovered Demeter placing Demophon in the fire. Demophon's incomplete path to immortality is blamed on human misunderstanding (256-257). Humans, due to their mortality, lack the perspective of the gods. The gods mistake this for ignorance. It is this very inability to comprehend the future (the possible

outcomes of events) that prevents humans from enjoying the same lot as the gods. As Richardson says, "The case against men rests on their folly and inability to foresee the future. Because of this, they cannot improve their lot, and especially find a cure for death and age."[192]

Within the *Hymns*, as I argue, this inability is represented as a misunderstanding of the nature of the gods. The mortals perceive the gods' bodies, as they are manifested, and make assumptions based upon those bodies. The message of the *Hymns* is, like the rites at Eleusis, a path to understanding for mortals. Richardson summarizes, "That is, she wished to save Demophon from death and old age, but was unable to do so because men were ignorant and blind. She could, however, give to the Eleusinians the means of obtaining a better fate after death, through her favour and that of Persephone, and the special knowledge which the Mysteries supplied."[193]

The key moment of the Mysteries is represented as a spectacle, as discussed above. The *epopteia* is, in some versions, the second and final stage of initiation. Moreover, in all versions, some spectacle/revelation, and not ritual action, is the culmination of the ritual in the *telesterion*.[194] This revelation is described in terms similar to an epiphany. Most striking is the inclusion of light in contrast to the

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[192] Richardson (1974) p. 244.

[193] Richardson (1974) p. 24.

[194] Aristotle fr. 15 R. καθάπερ Ἀριστοτέλης ἀξιοῖ τοὺς τελουμένους οὐ μαθεῖν τι δεῖν ἀλλὰ παθεῖν καὶ διατεθῆναι, δηλονότι γενομένους ἐπιτηδείους.

darkness in earlier stages of the ceremony.[195] Light was also a striking feature within the *Hymns* for the moment of physical epiphany of the gods and goddesses.[196] However, as my close reading of the *Hymns* in Chapter Three showed, it was the spoken declaration of the god or goddess that marked the moment of true epiphany rather than the physical markers such as radiance, height or divine scent.

How does this correlate to the prominent role that vision played in the Mysteries? Recall the three segments, as discussed above, into which the rituals at Eleusis can be divided, " τά δρώμενα (cf. δρησμοσύνην, ὄργια), i.e. certain ritual actions, τά δεικνυμενα (cf. δ[εῖξε,], ἐπέφραδεν), sacred objects which were shown, and τά λεγόμενα, probably brief ritual sayings."[197] The first two, the ritual actions and the seen sacred objects, it can be argued, are attested in the *Hymn* – the veil, the silence followed eventually by shameful language (*aischrologia*), the ram's fleece, the fasting, the abstention from wine, and the drinking of the *kykeon*. The sacred objects are not identified but are, at least, indicated, as Richardson shows by the language used in Demeter's instructions (473-482). However, the ritual sayings, τά λεγόμενα, seem to be unaccounted for within the *Hymn*. As my discussion on epiphanies in Chapter Three demonstrated, within the *Homeric Hymns*,

[195] Richardson (1974) p. 26. Deubner (1966) p. 87. Boyancé (1962) p. 460.

[196] *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 189, 279; *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 86, 89, 174; *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 444.

[197] Richardson (1974) p. 302. For τά λεγόμενα, see Mylonas (1961) p. 261. The voice of the hierophant is at IG II$^2$ 3639 and Isocrates 4.28.

the spoken word is privileged over the visual. Information is conveyed, successfully, through speech not through observation (although physical objects and actions are used to refer to ritual and enable this communication). Thus, within my reading of the *Hymn*, the lack of any reference to the spoken portion of the rituals at Eleusis is problematic when the *Hymn* is used as a source for the events of the Mysteries.

## II. Apollo

The *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* contains both types of communication – unsuccessful communication, based on the body, and successful communication, based on ritual. However, the ritual moments in this *Hymn* are not linked as strongly to the performance of any given ritual. Apollo's interaction with mortals occurs in the second, "Pythian" portion of the *Hymn*.

Most scholars agree that the *Hymn* is a combination of two separate poems: a Delian hymn, ending at line 178, and a Pythian hymn.[198] This view was first put forward by David Ruhnken in 1782,[199] and has been modified by later scholars.[200]

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[198] For a survey of the secondary literature on the *Hymn* see Drerup (1937) pp. 81-99, Unte, Studien zum (1968) pp. 11-18, and Baumeister (1860) pp. 109-12.

[199] Ruhnken (1782). Miller (1986) notes that this is usually inaccurately ascribed to Ruhnken's *Epistula Critica in Homeri Hymnos et Hesiodum* of 1749.

[200] Wilamowitz (1920) followed by Humbert (1937) argues for a pre-existing Delian Hymn which was taken over by a later and inferior poet. Drerup (1937) argues for a split at 206, rather than Ruhnken's 178. See also Janko (1982) and Burkert (2001). A study by Sowa (1974) uses computer techniques to support an independent composition. Richardson (2009) argues for a three part structure.

There is of course an opposing camp which argues for the unity of the *Hymn*.[201] West states, "It is generally accepted that the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* was not conceived as a single poem but is a combination of two: a Delian hymn, D, performed at Delos and concerned with the god's birth there, and a Pythian hymn, P, concerned with his arrival and establishment at Delphi. What above all compels us to make a dichotomy is not the change of scene in itself, but the way D ends. The poet returns from the past to the present, and takes leave of his audience; farewell, he says, and remember me

[201] Gemoll, (1886, pp. 116-117), begins the argument against Ruhnken's division, but does not think the *Hymn* gives an impression of unity. Gemoll's main argument against division is that the *Hymn* was considered a single poem at least as early as the 2nd century A.D. External evidence for a separation of the *Hymns* relies heavily on a passage from Thucydides, (III.104), in which he cites the *Hymn to Apollo* as evidence for a festival on Delos. Thucydides then states that the poet, at this festival, ends his song of praise with an exact quote of lines 165-172 of the existing *Hymn to Apollo*, implying to interpreters of this passage that this is the end of a "Delian" *Hymn to Apollo*, rather than the "middle" of a longer *Hymn*, as we have it. However, it is debated whether what is ended is the entire song of praise ἐπαίνου or just that portion referring to the Delian Maidens. Also, according to Allen-Halliday (1936, p. 186), Thucydides would be unlikely to use the singular τοῦ προοιμίου Ἀπόλλωνος if he knew of more than one *Hymn to Apollo* and as the "Pythian" portion of the *Hymn* is certainly much older than Thucydides the inference is that the *Hymn* existed as one document back to even the 5th century B.C. West, (1975, p. 166), denies this argument based on a lack of the definite article in the text. Internal evidence for separation relies on the supposed epilogue found at the end of the Delian portion of the *Hymn*. Miller (1979) argues that 165-178 represent not an epilogue but a transition and (1986) that as part of genre of praise the *Hymn* would not be complete without both the "Delian" and "Pythian" portions.

ever after. He is quite clearly finishing. Whereupon there is an abrupt and unsatisfactory transition to P."[202]

The analysis which follows focuses on lines 440-546, the final section of the so-called Pythian hymn. As there is little to no direct "ritual" reference in these lines (unlike the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*), communication between Apollo and the Cretan sailors is, for the most part, unsuccessful. Apollo's direct speech of self revelation (his epiphany), in which he gives the sailors his instructions, mirrors Demeter's commands to Metaneira for the building of a temple. This communication is successful. However, there is then a second scene of unsuccessful communication, which demonstrates not the sailors' inability to correctly perceive the god, but, instead, Apollo's inability to correctly perceive the sailors.

A. Communication Based on the Body

In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, Apollo manifests himself to the Cretan sailors in the form of a young man, after having hijacked their ship in the form of a dolphin and travelled to his temple at Delphi in the form of a star.[203] In Apollo's first interaction with the sailors he has yet to reveal that he is a god. He has taken the appearance of a young man.

> From there again he flew back to the ship, fast as thought,
> in the likeness of a young man, strong and vigorous
> in his first prime, his hair falling over his broad shoulders,
> and he addressed them in winged words:

[202] West (1975) p. 161.
[203] See Chapter Three for more on Apollo as a dolphin and as a star.

ἔνθεν δ' αὖτ' ἐπὶ νῆα νόημ' ὣς ἅλτο πέτεσθαι
ἀνέρι εἰδόμενος αἰζηῷ τε κρατερῷ τε
πρωθήβῃ, χαίτης εἰλυμένος εὐρέας ὤμους·
καί σφεας φωνήσας ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα·
(*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 448-451)

Apollo's address to the sailors pretends an ignorance of their identity and method of arrival. This pretense is part of Apollo's assumption of a mortal body. Apollo's pretense of ignorance is similar to Demeter's assumption of a barren body.

Who are you, sirs? From where do you sail the watery ways?
Are you on business, or roaming at random over the sea
as freebooters do, who gamble their lives abroad
to bring trouble to other folk?
Why do you sit so downcast without disembarking
or stowing your ship's tackle?
That's the usual way of civilized men
when they reach landing their dark ship,
weary with effort, and their hearts are at once seized
with appetite for sweet food.

ὦ ξεῖνοι τίνες ἐστέ; πόθεν πλεῖθ' ὑγρὰ κέλευθα;
ἤ τι κατὰ πρῆξιν, ἦ μαψιδίως ἀλάλησθε
οἷά τε ληϊστῆρες ὑπεὶρ ἅλα, τοί τ' ἀλόωνται
ψυχὰς παρθέμενοι κακὸν ἀλλοδαποῖσι φέροντες;
τίφθ' οὕτως ἦσθον τετιηότες, οὐδ' ἐπὶ γαῖαν
ἔκβητ', οὐδὲ καθ' ὅπλα μελαίνης νηὸς ἔθεσθε;
αὕτη μέν γε δίκη πέλει ἀνδρῶν ἀλφηστάων
ὁππόταν ἐκ πόντοιο ποτὶ χθονὶ νηῒ μελαίνῃ
ἔλθωσιν καμάτῳ ἀδηκότες, αὐτίκα δέ σφεας
σίτοιο γλυκεροῖο περὶ φρένας ἵμερος αἱρεῖ.
(*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 452-461)

The first three questions – Who are you? Where are you from? What sort of people are you? – are all questions to which Apollo knows the answer. But then Apollo goes on to ask basically "why aren't you doing anything now." Apollo cannot understand why the sailors are just sitting there. He goes on to list a series of actions that men "normally" take upon landing – disembarking, stowing the tackle, eating,

and drinking. Apollo's list is that of an outsider and observer rather than a participant. He has hijacked a ship full of mortals and cannot understand why they are behaving strangely.

The sailors respond to the first portion of Apollo's questions in a normal way. They answer him regarding who they are, where they are from, and how they arrived in this place. They respond to the normal portions of Apollo's greeting, the portions that match what a mortal would ask. However, they do not respond to his implicit question about why they are behaving strangely, why they are not disembarking and eating, except to say that "some god brought them there." This is the reason for their strange behavior. Their ship has just been hijacked by a dolphin!

They also ask Apollo in return where they are and what sort of people live there (468). Apollo, at this point, gives up the pretense of being a mortal. He does not respond to their question, but declares himself to be Apollo and gives them instructions. His concern throughout this interaction is with the behavior of the mortals. And when they do not behave as he expects, by disembarking, securing their ship, and eating, he commands that they do so. Apollo shifts the communication paradigm from "based on the body" to "based on ritual" and, as such, these commands will be successful.

B. Communication Based on Ritual

Apollo's commands to the mortals are, like the two scenes in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, successful because of the relationship to ritual. Because Apollo has declared his identity and is directly instructing the sailors on their new duties as priests at his oracle, this communication succeeds.

> Sirs, who dwelt in wooded Cnossos before,
> now you will return no more
> to your lovely city and your fine individual homes
> and your dear wives: you will occupy my rich temple here,
> which is widely honored by men.
> For I am Zeus' son, I declare myself Apollo;
>
> ξεῖνοι, τοὶ Κνωσὸν πολυδένδρεον ἀμφινέμεσθε
> τὸ πρίν, ἀτὰρ νῦν οὐκ ἔθ' ὑπότροποι αὖθις ἔσεσθε
> ἔς τε πόλιν ἐρατὴν καὶ δώματα καλὰ ἕκαστος
> ἔς τε φίλας ἀλόχους, ἀλλ' ἐνθάδε πίονα νηὸν
> ἕξετ' ἐμὸν πολλοῖσι τετιμένον ἀνθρώποισιν·
> εἰμὶ δ' ἐγὼ Διὸς υἱός, Ἀπόλλων δ' εὔχομαι εἶναι,
> (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 475-480)

The sailors do in fact disembark and secure their ship and eat. They then, as Apollo instructed, travel to the temple, singing a paean along the way (500, 517). The Ie Paieon[204] was part of the later Pythian Games. West claims for the Pythian portion of the *Hymn to Apollo* a possible original performance at the first Pythian Games in 586.[205] The paean that the sailors (now priests) sing reflects both the successful forms of communication (prayer, sacrifice, libation, hymns, etc.) and the *Hymn* of which it is a part.

[204] Strabo 421; Paus.x. 7. 2. See Käppel (1992), Schröder (1999) and Rutherford (2001).

[205] West (2003) p. 10.

C. Gods' misunderstanding

Apollo's inability to understand the irregular behavior of the Cretan sailors upon first landing is echoed by his inability to understand (and empathize with) their questions after they have arrived at the temple.

> Lord, as you have brought us far from our dear ones and
> our native land – so it must have pleased your heart –
> how are we going to feed ourselves now? That's what we want you to consider.
> This land is not attractive as a bearer of harvest, nor rich in grassland,
> so as for us to live off it and serve the public at the same time.
>
> ὦ ἄν᾽ ἐπεὶ δὴ τῆλε φίλων καὶ πατρίδος αἴης
> ἤγαγες· οὕτω που τῷ σῷ φίλον ἔπλετο θυμῷ·
> πῶς καὶ νῦν βιόμεσθα; τό σε φράζεσθαι ἄνωγμεν.
> οὔτε τρυγηφόρος ἥδε γ᾽ ἐπήρατος οὔτ᾽ εὐλείμων,
> ὥς τ᾽ ἀπό τ᾽ εὖ ζώειν καὶ ἅμ᾽ ἀνθρώποισιν ὀπηδεῖν.
> (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 526-530)

The sailors voice a legitimate concern for their homeland, their families, and their sustenance. They are asking Apollo about how they are to perform the normal behavior of mortals. These ideas of normalcy, of the routines that mortals must perform to survive, are of the same sort that Apollo questioned the sailors about upon their arrival. That Apollo still cannot understand the mortals' concern with these matters (here, food and homeland) highlights the fact that he was giving a "performance" in the earlier scene when the sailors arrived. Apollo, as discussed above, mimicked normal human questioning of strangers, pretending ignorance of the sailors' origin, but was then, as now, truly confused about their behavior.

Apollo's reaction to the sailors' questions, as to how they are going to survive without their families, communities, or farmland, is from the same trope of mortal ignorance as was discussed above.

> Oh foolish men of misplaced suffering,
> who want anxiety, hard toil, and heartache.
> I will give you a simple answer to bear in mind.
> Each of you must just keep a knife in his right hand
> and keep slaughtering sheep: they will be available in abundance,
> as many as the thronging peoples bring for me.
>
> νήπιοι ἄνθρωποι δυστλήμονες οἳ μελεδῶνας
> βούλεσθ' ἀργαλέους τε πόνους καὶ στείνεα θυμῷ·
> ῥηϊδιον ἔπος ὔμμ' ἐρέω καὶ ἐπὶ φρεσὶ θήσω.
> δεξιτερῇ μάλ' ἕκαστος ἔχων ἐν χειρὶ μάχαιραν
> σφάζειν αἰεὶ μῆλα· τὰ δ' ἄφθονα πάντα παρέσται,
> ὅσσα ἐμοί κ' ἀγάγωσι περικλυτὰ φῦλ' ἀνθρώπων·
> (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 532-537)

It is mortal ignorance that condemns them to their lot in life. Apollo accuses them of almost willful ignorance when he states that they want anxiety and hard toil and heartache. And like the Mysteries, as discussed above, which grant a form of knowledge that allows men to better their lot, Apollo offers a solution here also. By being his priests, these few, select men, will escape the lot of toil that most must endure, living off the offerings that people bring to the temple (almost like gods).

This can be taken a step further. Through the intermediary of the priests, the temple at Delphi offers a form of access to the gods, access to understanding the future, a lack of which, as discussed above, is what "causes" man's difficult lot.[206] Delphi itself, like the Mysteries, offers humans a way to better their lot in life by

[206] cf. *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, where Demeter says, "Ignorant humans and witless to recognize; a dispensation of coming good or ill" (256-257).

understanding what is or might be good for them. While only the priests have direct access to this knowledge (unlike the inclusiveness of the Mysteries), visitors can obtain it through them. Apollo's oracle at Delphi offers a form of communication with the gods that is successful, just as the Mysteries offer a new relationship with the goddesses, one not based on the body, but on ritual.

III. Aphrodite

The *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* has been called the "*carmen Homeri nomine dignissimum*."[207] Peter Walcot summarizes the recent praises of the *Hymn* thus, "For example, the poem strikes Paul Friedrich as 'brilliant and unitary'; M. L. West finds it 'the finest of the longer hymns', while Peter Smith claims it as 'the most finished and appealing of the longer *Homeric Hymns'*; in much the same vein Richard Janko describes the poem as 'the most admirable of the major *Homeric Hymns*.'"[208] Recent scholarship has focused on the style or the "love themes" of the *Hymn*, with Peter Smith's detailed analysis being the exception.[209] Smith, within his analysis, interprets

[207] Herman (1806) p. 252.

[208] Walcot (1991) p. 137. Friedrich (1978) p. 65; West in Dover (1980) p. 23; Smith (1981) p. 2; Janko (1982) p. 151.

[209] There have been two recent surveys of work on the *Hymn to Aphrodite*. Podbielski (1971) and Lenz (1975). Smith (1981) provides a text, translation, analysis, and extensive notes to the *Hymn*. In addition there is a recent commentary Faulkner (2008). See also, Segal (1974) and Van Eck (1978). More recently, Parry (1986) analyses erotic *ananke* within the *Hymn* and Walcot analyses the literary

the myth as an evaluation of and mediation between man's desire to escape death and the knowledge that he must die.

This mediation can be taken one step further within the *Hymn* and the model of communication/understanding presented in this dissertation. The *Hymn* describes not only the mortal condition, but the journey of Aphrodite in coming to understand it. The *Hymn* presents the goddess gaining understanding about the limits of the body, specifically death, which Apollo and Demeter did not gain. The *Hymn* does not contain the same connection to a specific ritual or ritual place as the *Hymns to Demeter* and *Apollo*. However, the *Hymn to Apollo* describes the possibility of a new form of communication and as the *Hymn to Demeter* describes the possibility for a new relationship for mortals with the gods, the *Hymn to Aphrodite* describes a new understanding that the goddess gains about mortals.

The specific problem described at the opening the *Hymn* is that Aphrodite is causing a sort of miscegenation. She is causing the gods to mix with mortals.[210] Zeus turns the tables on her by causing her to suffer love for the mortal Anchises. She appears to him as a young maiden, complete with a story of abduction by Hermes.[211] After convincing him that she is to be his wife, they consummate their relationship.

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merits of the *Hymn*. Clay (1989) sees in the *Hymn* an explanation for the end of the race of heroes pp. 169-70. Cyrino (1993) analyses the *Hymn* for is "explicitly erotic" themes.

[210] Smith (1981) p. 40.

[211] See Chapter Two, and above.

Finally, Aphrodite wakes him, reveals herself as a goddess,[212] and gives him instructions on their child, Aeneas. Her manifestation and her revelations (epiphany) follow the same patterns as the other *Hymns*, but her instructions to Anchises, as discussed further below, revolve entirely around how to keep the secret of Aeneas' parentage.

> Anchises most glorious of mortal men,
> be of good courage, and let your heart not be too afraid.
> You need have no fear of suffering any harm from me
> or the other blessed ones, for you are dear to the gods indeed.
> You are to have a dear son who will rule among the Trojans,
> as will the children born to his children continually;
> his name shall be Aeneas (Aineias), because an
> *ainon akhos* (terrible sorrow) took me, that I fell into a mortal man's bed.
>
> Ἀγχίση, κύδιστε καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων,
> θάρσει, μηδέ τι σῇσι μετὰ φρεσὶ δείδιθι λίην·
> οὐ γάρ τοί τι δέος παθέειν κακὸν ἐξ ἐμέθεν γε
> οὐδ' ἄλλων μακάρων, ἐπεὶ ἦ φίλος ἐσσὶ θεοῖσι.
> σοὶ δ' ἔσται φίλος υἱὸς ὃς ἐν Τρώεσσιν ἀνάξει
> καὶ παῖδες παίδεσσι διαμπερὲς ἐκγεγάονται·
> τῷ δὲ καὶ Αἰνείας ὄνομ' ἔσσεται οὕνεκά μ' αἰνὸν
> ἔσχεν ἄχος ἕνεκα βροτοῦ ἀνέρος ἔμπεσον εὐνῇ·
> (*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 192-199)

Aphrodite's embarrassment over having slept with a mortal is the stated purpose of Zeus at the opening of the poem. The embarrassment of Aphrodite frames the seduction and in fact the entire narrative. Smith comments, "Zeus' purpose (46-52) and its fulfillment, in Aphrodite's first confession of embarrassment to Anchises (247-255), frame the story of the seduction the motif of her embarrassment is later

[212] See Chapter Three.

used again (281-290) as a conclusion to the poet's narrative as a whole, when she enjoins Anchises to keep secret her identity."[213]

However, as Smith also notes,[214] it is not embarrassment at all that is at stake here, but terrible sorrow (*ainon akhos*). This sorrow comes from knowing that Anchises, Aeneas, and all the children born to his children, are mortal and will die, but more specifically stated in the *Hymn* it comes from the simple fact that Anchises will age and lose the physical beauty that was central to their encounter.

> I would not choose for you to be like that among the gods,
> to be immortal and live for ever.
> If you could go on living as you are now in appearance and
> build, and be known as my husband,
> sorrow would not then enfold my subtle mind.
> But as it is, you will soon be enfolded by hostile, merciless
> old age, which attends men in the time to come,
> accursed, wearisome, abhorred by the gods;
> while I shall suffer great reproach among the gods
> evermore on your account.
>
> οὐκ ἂν ἐγώ γε σὲ τοῖον ἐν ἀθανάτοισιν ἑλοίμην
> ἀθάνατόν τ' εἶναι καὶ ζώειν ἤματα πάντα.
> ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν τοιοῦτος ἐὼν εἶδός τε δέμας τε
> ζώοις, ἡμέτερός τε πόσις κεκλημένος εἴης,
> οὐκ ἂν ἔπειτά μ' ἄχος πυκινὰς φρένας ἀμφικαλύπτοι.
> νῦν δέ σε μὲν τάχα γῆρας ὁμοίιον ἀμφικαλύψει
> νηλειές, τό τ' ἔπειτα παρίσταται ἀνθρώποισιν,
> οὐλόμενον καματηρόν, ὅ τε στυγέουσι θεοί περ.
> αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ μέγ' ὄνειδος ἐν ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσιν
> ἔσσεται ἤματα πάντα διαμπερὲς εἵνεκα σεῖο,
>
> (*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 239-249)

[213] Smith (1981) p. 111 n. 29.

[214] Smith (1981) p. 111 n. 30. Smith makes this point specifically against Lenz (1975, p. 129), who claims that the other gods are not concerned about loving mortals but about Aphrodite's threat to the stable Olympian hierarchy.

Aphrodite's concern here seems to the modern mind to be a superficial complaint. But the focus on the physical markers of aging, the focus on the body, is significant, not shallow. Aphrodite's approach to Anchises mirrors Apollo's approach to the Cretan sailors. She was playing at being human. Apollo aped common human questions in greeting, but failed to understand the real concerns of the sailors at being hijacked. Aphrodite, in turn, mimicked the mortal (female) need to adorn the body,[215] but she will, unlike Apollo, have to understand the real concern of Anchises over physical vulnerability.

Anchises' fear, upon discovering he has slept with Aphrodite, is that he will be lamed or struck impotent. This is in fact what happens in other versions of the myth, after he violates the goddess' command not to reveal Aeneas' parentage.[216] Aphrodite can reassure him on this point (192-193 above) but then proceeds to give a long speech about why she cannot (will not?) remove the natural enfeeblement that time brings to all mortals.

Aphrodite does not give a specific reason why she cannot make Anchises immortal, but instead offers two negative examples, Ganymede and Tithonus. Ganymede was made immortal by Zeus, who abducted him and made him the wine-pourer for the gods. The story is given a negative reading by what follows

[215] Scenes of bathing and adornment before seduction are not limited to mortals in archaic poetry, cf. Hera *Iliad* 14.169-187. See the discussion in Chapter Three on Aphrodite's adornments.

[216] For Anchises' enfeeblement in ancient evidence, see Smith (1981) p. 142 n. 129.

Ganymede's abduction.[217] Aphrodite's story turns to Tros, whose heart was held by "unforgettable grief" (pe/nqoj a1laston).[218] The grief is not just out of ignorance for Ganymedes' fate, as even after he has been enlightened, Tros is given a gift (ui]oj a1poina) to compensate for the *loss* of his son. The case of Tithonus is less ambiguously negative. He is granted immortality, but not eternal youth. As such he ages until he is no longer attractive to Eos, and yet more until he can no longer move and is locked away from sight.

The two negative examples of immortality are complementary to each other. Ganymede has eternal youth and Tithonus has eternal age. The process of aging is the exact problem that Aphrodite had identified before she began her examples. She says, "If you could go on living as you are now in appearance and build" (ἀλλ᾽ εἰ μὲν τοιοῦτος ἐὼν εἶδός τε δέμας τε ζώοις, 241). Anchises, when Aphrodite encounters him on the side of Mount Ida, occupies the space between the opposite poles of Ganymede and Tithonus. However, since he is a mortal, he cannot remain there.

Aphrodite's exempla and, more importantly, the fact that she does not try (and fail) to grant Anchises immortality demonstrates that she recognizes this limitation of

[217] For the homosexual nature of the relationship, especially the abduction of the love interest by the lover as negative, see Smith (1981) p. 72, Murray (1934) p.125, Finley (1978) p. 128, and Dover (1978) p. 195.

[218] Smith (1981) p. 72. However, the Cretan aristocrats in Ephoros ap. Strab. 10.4.21 view the abduction as desirable.

the human body - its need to age. Thus, the message of the *Hymn*, in the form of a lesson to Aphrodite about the limits of the body is, to a large extent, an example of successful communication. She (properly) offers Anchises (in exchange for his obeying her orders to remain silent) the two types of immortality truly available to mortals, children and fame. Aeneas, as both a child and as the progenitor of the ruling race which will eventually be Rome, embodies these two types. However, the *Hymn* is itself silent on the eventual outcome of Anchises promise to remain silent, leaving the *success* of the communication to the judgment of the particular audience. Anchises will eventually tell who Aeneas' mother really is. The fact that the *Hymn* doesn't talk about it might have to do with either ritual constraints – its use in a festival of Aphrodite – or genealogical constraints – its performance at the court of local aristocrats who claimed descent from Anchises via Aeneas (and might well have had a hero cult of either hero), or both. Thus, Aphrodite, if one considers the eventual outcome, fails to truly understand the mortal Anchises and her lack of understanding centers on the body. Aphrodite has misjudged the human (male?) propensity for drink and sexual boasting - both body driven activities.

I would argue that the *Hymn* is silent about the eventual (failed) outcome of this communication because the author of the *Hymn*, either consciously or unconsciously, reflected the general pattern of the *Homeric Hymns* seen throughout my analysis. That is the *Hymns* all move towards both the revelation and recognition of the god and a final set of (as I argue, successful) instruction. If the *Hymn to*

*Aphrodite* elaborated upon the later transgression of Anchises (and his punishment), it would differ significantly from the pattern of the *Hymns* as a whole.[219]

Therefore, the *Hymn to Aphrodite* concludes with the idea that Anchises will continue to have nothing to fear and will receive the two types of immortality available to mortals, glory and offspring. While the *Hymn to Demeter* offered all mortal men a way to better their lot, through initiation in the Mysteries, and the *Hymn to Apollo* offered a few men, the Cretan sailors, a better lot and for all men who visit the oracle a new access to knowledge, the *Hymn to Aphrodite* emphasizes the two types of immortality actually and already available to mortals, fame and offspring.

## IV. Hermes

The *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* has been critiqued as rambling and even pointless. For example, West says of the *Hymn*, "it is the most incompetent in construction, with many narrative inconsistencies and redundancies and no command of the even tempo appropriate to epic storytelling."[220] Because of this view of the *Hymn*, many scholars have focused on episodes rather than the *Hymn* as a whole.[221] However, recent scholarship has overturned this view of the *Hymn* and has attempted more comprehensive readings of the *Hymn*, not focused on its style, in particular that

[219] This pattern need not be caused by a concern with communication. It is sufficient to note that the *Hymns* as praise of the gods would naturally move towards a successful conclusion.

[220] West (2003) p. 12.

[221] Burkert (1984) and Larson (1995) discuss the etiologies provided within the *Hymn*.

of Clay and Johnston. Jenny Strauss Clay argues that the pace of the *Hymn* is appropriate to and reflective of the nature of the god to whom it is dedicated. Further she places it thematically within the general trend of the acquisition of *timai* which she identifies for all of the *Hymns*.[222] Clay's agenda is to argue for the pan Hellenic nature of the *Hymns*, specifically as propaganda. Clay's argument calls for a conscious effort in the composition of each *Hymn* which would make it suitable for performance at multiple locations throughout Greece. Sarah Iles Johnston, while not denying the possibility and even likelihood of multiple performances of the *Hymn*, offers a more specific performative context – athletic competitions (Hermaia) of young men.[223] Johnston focuses on the cattle-raid portion of the myth, showing how the poet creatively expressed the association between athletics and maturation through careful adaptation of myth.[224]

The *Hymn* offers a very specific problem for the model of communication and understanding described in this dissertation. My model is based on the interactions of mortals and immortals. Each *Hymn* analyzed in this chapter has engaged with the problems of communication and understanding and offered some

[222] Clay (1989). Stehle (1997) follows Clay.

[223] Johnston (2002).

[224] Johnston (2002) pp. 127-128.

solution. How does the *Hymn to Hermes* fit into this model if it does not contain any significant interaction between mortals and immortals?[225]

The *Hymn to Hermes* addresses the most interesting problem of all, one that is present in all three of the previously analyzed *Hymns*. It has been emphasized throughout how mortals cannot understand or effectively communicate with immortals because of the assumptions they make based on the physical bodies in which the gods manifest themselves. The gods themselves accused mortals of this ignorance. However, while it has been noted that the gods cannot, in turn, understand the mortals, this idea has not been developed. In the *Hymn to Demeter*, the mortals are called foolish (256-257) and need to appease the goddess' wrath after Metaneira discovers Demophon in the fire (251, 292). In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, Apollo does not properly understand the concerns of the sailors regarding their bodies, and especially regarding food. Apollo's ignorance is revealed by his reactions, both when the sailors do not eat upon landing (453-461) and when they question him about sustenance after reaching the temple (532-544). Aphrodite, in contrast, gains a better understanding of the mortal body, specifically its need to mature and age naturally, an understanding which she presumably did not have prior to the events of the narrative.

The *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* represents Hermes playing with this problem and using the gods' (specifically Apollo's) inability to understand the limits of the

[225] For the scene at Onchestus between both Hermes and the old man and Apollo and the old man see Tzifopoulos (2000). The confusion here is due not to any problems of communication between mortals and immortals, but to the manipulation of "wisdom expressions."

body as a technique to create confusion. Just as Yannis Tzifopoulos shows Hermes to be a master manipulator of wisdom expressions,[226] he is also a master manipulator of the limits, the perceived limits, of his body.

When Apollo comes to the cave where the nymph Maia and the "baby" Hermes live, aided not at all by the old man at Onchestos but instead by augury, he is confused to find no trace of the stolen cattle. He demands an explanation and the "baby" Hermes answers him.

> "Son of Leto, what do
> you mean by these harsh words, coming here in search of
> cattle that dwell in the fields? I haven't seen them, I
> haven't inquired, I haven't been told. I couldn't tell you
> where they are, or earn a reward for it. I don't look like a
> cattle rustler, a strong man. That isn't my business, I'm
> more interested in other things: what I'm interested in is
> sleeping, and my mother's milk, and having wrappings
> round my shoulders, and warm baths. I hope no one comes
> to hear what this dispute was about; it would astonish the
> immortals, the idea of a newborn child coming the rough the
> porch with cattle that dwell in the fields. That's nonsense
> you're talking. I was born yesterday, my feet are tender,
> and it's rough ground beneath.

> Λητοΐδη τίνα τοῦτον ἀπηνέα μῦθον ἔειπας
> καὶ βοῦς ἀγραύλους διζήμενος ἐνθάδ' ἱκάνεις;
> οὐκ ἴδον, οὐ πυθόμην, οὐκ ἄλλου μῦθον ἄκουσα·
> οὐκ ἂν μηνύσαιμ', οὐκ ἂν μήνυτρον ἀροίμην·
> οὐδὲ βοῶν ἐλατῆρι κραταιῷ φωτὶ ἔοικα,
> οὐδ' ἐμὸν ἔργον τοῦτο, πάρος δέ μοι ἄλλα μέμηλεν·
> ὕπνος ἐμοί γε μέμηλε καὶ ἡμετέρης γάλα μητρός,
> σπάργανά τ' ἀμφ' ὤμοισιν ἔχειν καὶ θερμὰ λοετρά.
> μή τις τοῦτο πύθοιτο πόθεν τόδε νεῖκος ἐτύχθη·
> καί κεν δὴ μέγα θαῦμα μετ' ἀθανάτοισι γένοιτο
> παῖδα νέον γεγαῶτα διὰ προθύροιο περῆσαι
> βουσὶ μετ' ἀγραύλοισι· τὸ δ' ἀπρεπέως ἀγορεύεις.
> χθὲς γενόμην, ἁπαλοὶ δὲ πόδες, τρηχεῖα δ' ὑπὸ χθών.

[226] Tzifopoulos (2000).

(*Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 261-273)

Hermes gives Apollo many reasons that it could not have been him. Each is a direct appeal to an understanding of a limited body. Hermes says, 'I don't look like a cattle rustler, a strong man', implying that the feat of stealing the cows requires some real physical attribute, as it would for any mortal attempting it. Hermes claims to only be interested in his mother's milk. Milk which is a human food, satisfying a hunger that Apollo as a god cannot understand.[227] Each excuse Hermes gives depends upon a belief, a shared belief, between himself and his audience (Apollo, or the reader) in the limits of the body. If those limits have no real bearing on the situation, if they can be violated at any point, this line of reasoning becomes useless.

However, Apollo plays by the rules, there is at least a tacit agreement that the limits of the body do apply. Apollo does not say anything to the effect of Hermes being a god, an immortal, and therefore not bound by the rules of the body. Instead, Apollo takes Hermes to Zeus to sort out the confusion. The confusion is never truly sorted, but through a comedic interchange, the gods come to an understanding, the lyre is exchanged for the irreplaceable cattle, and Hermes is welcomed among the gods.

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[227] While gods can and do suckle from their mothers in Greek myth, within the *Homeric Hymns* none do. Apollo is not breast-fed by his mother, but is fed nectar and ambrosia by Themis (123-125). Hermes sets off on his adventures directly from birth, having eaten neither milk nor ambrosia and nectar (17-21). Hermes is seeking Apollo's cows and feels hunger for this "mortal" food, but in the end does not partake of it (130-133).

The *Hymn* does not offer an explicit solution to the problem of communication in the way the *Hymns to Apollo* and *Demeter*. Nor does Hermes learn anything like Aphrodite. Instead, what this *Hymn* offers is Hermes himself. The god who is able to understand the limits of the perceived body enough to manipulate the perceptions to his own ends either to effect or to obscure communication is the god who will become the messenger of the gods to mortals. Thus as the *Hymns to Demeter* and *Apollo* offered humans a new relationship to the gods and access to their knowledge, respectively, and the *Hymn to Aphrodite* offered to the goddess a better understanding of mortal limits, the *Hymn to Hermes* provides a method of communicating with mortals to the gods, through the intermediary of Hermes. Of course, Hermes already appears in earlier myth serving this function, but the *Hymn* has recast his role as a messenger in terms of his ability to understand the body and, thus, his ability to effectively communicate with mortals.

## Conclusion

The longer *Homeric Hymns*, as I have demonstrated, have as a major focus the relationship between mortals and immortals, specifically the communication between the two, both successful and unsuccessful communication. The *Hymns* represent communication based upon assumptions about the body as unsuccessful. This is important in a culture that imagined its gods as anthropomorphic and as being key characters in literature. In this Chapter, I have shown how the *Hymns* predicate successful communication upon the presence of ritual references, creating a link

between ritual and successful communication for their audience(s). The intended audience of this message is both the mortals and immortals within the *Hymns* and, through the performance, the mortals and immortals outside the *Hymns*.

Each *Hymn* discussed in this Chapter has as its end result a new take on communication. The *Hymn to Demeter* ends with the establishment of the Eleusinian Mysteries which create for initiates a closer relationship with the goddesses. The *Hymn to Apollo* ends with the establishment of the oracle at Delphi which grants all mortals, through the intermediary of the priests, access to divine knowledge. The *Hymn to Aphrodite* illustrates the goddess' acquisition of a new understanding of mortals and the limits of mortal bodies. Just as *the* limit described for mortal bodies was mortality (and the *violation* for gods was immortality), this *Hymn* ends with an understanding by Aphrodite about mortals' inability to have the sort of immortality that defines a god. And like the *Hymn to Apollo* and the *Hymn to Demeter*, it offers a solution. Anchises receives not immortality of his body, but immortality of his memory through glory and offspring (unlike the Eleusinian Mysteries or the oracle at Delphi, the *Hymn* does not represent these options as being created or instituted within its narrative). Finally, the *Hymn to Hermes* describes the god's skills in such a way that his function as a messenger of the gods is justified by his unique ability to understand and manipulate perceptions of the body.

# Epilogue

My dissertation has focused on the *Homeric Hymns*. However, I believe that the model presented here can be productively applied to archaic poetry and beyond. For example, the cognitive model of the gods' bodies, as presented in Chapters One and Two, could be applied to the representations of the gods in Homeric epic. I do not think that the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* focus on the issue of communication between mortals and immortals in the same way the as the *Homeric Hymns*. However, by using this same model, the characterizations of the gods in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* can be seen as a third method to maintain the limits of the body which was the focus of Chapter Two. The characterizations I refer to are specifically those instances where the gods are portrayed as displaying "negative" human characteristics - greed, revenge, anger, etc. I would argue using the cognitive model that these characterizations serve to balance out *violations* of the body displayed by the gods. Just as the use of tools moves the *violation* away from the body in my analysis of the *Homeric Hymns*, "negative" characterizations can serve to counterbalance displays of supernatural power, bringing perceptions of the god back into the range of PERSON.

The obvious question following from this is, if the epics are not about communication per se why would the *template* need to be maintained? I do not have an answer for this yet, but will offer one speculation. Categories within epic are

neither as defined nor static as in the *Homeric Hymns*. That is, in the *Hymns* there are mortals and there are gods and the model of communication applied to each the same. If there is ritual present, then communication will be successful. On the other hand, in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, there are different categories or levels of mortals - heroes, seers, kings, etc. I propose that a close analysis of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* with the model of communication outlined in my dissertation would allow a sort of quantitative reading of a given mortals proximity to the gods, based on perceptions of the body, forms of address and, ultimately, the success of their communications. What results such an analysis would yield will have to await further study.

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